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DID JOHN THE APOSTLE WRITE THE GOSPEL WHICH BEARS HIS NAME?

THE "Westminster Review" for July, 1864, in an article entitled "Liberal French Protestantism," contains the following sentences, which, we think, will commend themselves to every candid reader, as, in the main, true: "The fourth Gospel has the appearance of being, for the most part, homogeneous, — of having proceeded, with some exceptions, from a single author; and there is claimed for it, and, according to some, it claims for itself, to be the work of the Apostle John. It therefore must stand much higher or much lower as evidence than the other Gospels. If it was the production of the apostle, it was the production of an eye-witness of the events which it relates, which cannot be said of any other of the Gospels as we now have them (?). If it was not the production of the apostle who is supposed to have been present at the transactions it narrates, and yet claims to be his production, it is less worthy of credit than the writings which have been founded on tradition. They may not be true, and yet not intentionally false. The first Gospels may be more or less unhistorical, but are not on that account to be termed fictitious. The Gospel according to John, if it be not by John, is not only unhistorical, but fictitious. . . . If the veracity of the rest of the narrative be disputable, we cannot attach any special importance to the circumstance that special discourses are put into the mouth of Jesus himself; for this may well be no more than an artifice of

composition or literary form, whereby the author delivers his own conception concerning the indwelling of the divine in the humanity of Jesus Christ." As our interrogation-mark indicates, we are far from agreeing with this writer in his assumption concerning the other Gospels: but we are entirely at one with him in his estimate of the importance of the inquiry concerning the authorship of the fourth Gospel, and are at loss to understand what they mean who tell us that it does not matter whether John the apostle was the writer of it, or John the presbyter, or some altogether unknown person; or whether it belongs to the last of the first century, near the close of the life of St. John, or to the middle of the second. Christianity does not depend upon the Gospel according to St. John. The word was preached and believed in, to their unspeakable comfort, by multitudes long before "the beloved disciple" wrote; and the truth concerning the relation of Jesus to the Father is witnessed for, though not so abundantly, by others, as well as by him who leaned upon the Lord's breast, and lived nearest to his heart. Nevertheless, in the marvellous providence of God, as we believe, it was given to John to complete the circle of divine instructions; and without him we lack a part of what the great Revealer designs for us. We have been moved of late by much that has been written — not, as it seems to us, to edification — about the historical and internal evidences of the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels, to refresh our acquaintance with the subject, and to ask again whether there is really foundation for the sweeping denials which have become so common in these days. In this short paper, we propose to lay before plain readers a few facts that may satisfy them, as they have satisfied us, that no such foundation does really exist; and that, as there are dogmatists in the interests of what is called faith so there are dogmatists in the interests of what is called scepticism.

Demonstration in matters of this sort is, of course, not to be looked for; but we can have a probable evidence which abundantly prepares the way for the proper action of religious and moral truth upon the mind and heart. The writer in the "Westminster" says, "We have no reliable external evidence

to the existence of the fourth Gospel much before, if at all before, the middle of the second century." We confidently take issue with this writer upon this statement. We affirm that we have such "reliable external evidence."

1. We find such evidence in the fact, that when, in the early Church, the canon of New-Testament Scripture was settled, and a line was drawn between the books universally received and the books about which there was a question, we get no hint that John's Gospel was brought into any controversy of this sort. Jerome and Eusebius, in the fourth century, had the facts before them upon which to form an opinion; and they knew nothing about the modern doubts, but quite the contrary. There is no reason to declare that they were indiscriminating in this thing: in fact, we know that they did discriminate. We shall not accept the opinion of the early Church as to the canon, as the result of inspiration; neither shall we set aside their opinion, when we find so much to justify, and so little, indeed nothing of any importance, to set off against it.

2. We find "reliable historical evidence" in the fact that Tertullian, of Northern Africa, writing against the heretic Marcion, early in the third century, viz., 207 or 208, quotes the Gospel of John in refutation of the man's heresies. Referring to the testimonies of Luke (which that writer had mutilated), in the following words, "I affirm that not only in the churches founded by apostles, but in all which have fellowship with them, that Gospel of Luke, which we so steadily defend, has been received from its first publication," he adds, that "the same authority of the apostolic churches will support the other Gospels, which, in like manner, we have from them conformably to their copies." "They," he says, "who were resolved to teach otherwise than the truth were under the necessity of new-modelling the records of the doctrine."* "If he (Marcion)*did not reject some and corrupt others of the Scriptures, the Gospel of John would convict him of error." Again: Clement of Alexandria,

* Norton's Genuineness, vol. i. p. 65.

writing during the latter part of the second and the earlier part of the third century, has left these remarkable words: "In the last place, John, observing that the things obvious to the senses had been clearly set forth in those Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), being urged by his friends, and divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel." He had travelled far and wide: he had been a philosopher, and became a Christian, and was a man of learning. Reasoning against some heretics, he says, "In the first place, we have not that saying in the four Gospels which have been handed down to us." Yet again: Irenæus, who was born in Asia Minor, but became bishop of Lyons, in France, during the latter half of the second century, tells us that "John, the disciple of the Lord, who leaned upon his breast, likewise published a Gospel, while he dwelt at Ephesus, in Asia." Having spoken of the other three, and having testified that the gospel was first preached, and afterwards written, Irenæus goes on to argue fancifully that there *can* be but four Gospels; an imagination, which, instead of weakening his testimony, as some sceptics have urged that it should, rather shows how settled in his mind was the fact which suggested the metaphorical language. He says, "The Gospel according to John declares his princely, complete, and glorious generation from the Father, saying, 'In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God: all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made.'"* Origen comes a little later than those who have been named. He was a most thoroughly learned man; and so abundant is he in his quotations from the Gospels, that they might almost have been restored, had they been lost, from his pages: he mentions John as having written last, and says that the four are received without controversy by all the churches of God under heaven. Must not all these men have found abundant grounds for their opinion? Did the Church accept a book which began to be generally known only in the middle of the second

* Norton, vol. i. p. 115.

century? Again: the canon of Muratori, about 170, A.D., is the earliest testimony that we have to the New Testament as a whole. Omitting some of the books which are included in our present collection, but were questioned in the ancient Church, viz., James, Hebrews, and 2 Peter, it includes John's Gospel. A statement of a slightly legendary character accompanies this testimony; but it is admitted, nevertheless, even by those against whom we are arguing, that the witness is good to the extent of establishing the currency of the Gospel as John's by the middle of the second century. How did it gain this currency, if there was no ground for it? Must we not at all events assign a very early date? and, if we assign an early date, do we not greatly increase the difficulty of referring it to any save the reputed author? Again: Tatian, writing about the time which has just been assigned to the Muratorian canon, draws repeatedly from our Gospel. Theophilus, his contemporary, Bishop of Antioch, quotes John by name; and, if he is the first to do this, we must remember that the names signified little except to Christians, for whom the fathers, for the most part, did not write, but rather for the adversaries of Christians.

3. We find "reliable external evidence" in the fact that Justin, who flourished about the year 150, being first a Platonist and then a Christian, and who was born in Samaria about the beginning of the second century, and died a martyr's death in Rome, speaks of "memoirs composed by apostles and their companions,"—memoirs which "are called Gospels,"—and quotes, with other passages that do not so exactly accord with the text of John (for it seems to have been his habit to quote from memory, and to give only the substance), these remarkable sentences: "For indeed Christ also said, 'Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;' and that it is impossible for those who are once born to enter into their mother's womb is plain to all." Not writing for believers, he does not give the names of the writers of the Gospels; but his description of the writings is perfect, — Matthew and John being apostles,

and Mark and Luke companions of apostles. These memoirs, he says, were read in the assemblies of the Christians on the Lord's Day; and the reading, so he tells us, was followed by exhortation, prayer, the Lord's Supper, and a contribution for the poor. Moreover, Justin expressly speaks of Christ as the Word and Power, "as we have learnt from the records." What records? What save the Gospel of John? How can the Westminster reviewer say that Justin cites no writing by the name of John? He does not formally; but he does to all intents and purposes. Was the writing from which he does quote lost, and was another put into its place to be read in the churches?

4. But we can go back to the very beginning of the second century. Here we meet with Papias, who, although he seems to have been more interested in unwritten traditions than in the recorded words, is allowed on all hands to have known the First Epistle of John as his epistle. Now this is indirectly a strong testimony to the Johannean authorship of the fourth Gospel, simply because two writings so according in style must have come from the same hand. But Papias, it is said, does not mention John's Gospel. It is true, and it is the single omission which is of any moment against the position which we are endeavoring to maintain. It is the silence of a man whose knowledge was confessedly small; whose judgment was confessedly less than his knowledge; who knew about the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, yet made but little account of them; and who, besides, lived so near to the time which has always been assigned to the publication of John's Gospel, that it could hardly have gained great currency. Doubtless those who made up the canon were aware of this silence, and could explain it better than we can: possibly they knew that Papias, although silent in some of his writings, had spoken in others of which we have no remains. Is this omission sufficient to offset all other testimonies, and to throw upon us the explanation of the phenomenon of the reception of a fictitious Gospel as genuine?

5. Once more: we find "reliable historical evidence" in the fact, that the so-called heretics and errorists of the second

century recognize what was claimed by the Church for the Gospel of John, even whilst they refuse themselves to admit this claim, or, by forced explanations, endeavor to weaken the significance of the appeals made by their opponents to the writings of our apostle. Marcion, for example, who came to Rome as early as the year 130, virtually witnesses for the currency of St. John's Gospel, even whilst he refused to accept it as authoritative. And if any one asks, how did he venture to dispute the genuineness of John's Gospel, and why is not his doubting to be allowed to influence our opinion in the matter, we will ask another question, How did he venture to mutilate the Gospel according to Luke, and to alter the Epistles of St. Paul, in order to conform them to his views?—things which he is admitted to have done. Two ways would seem to have been open to the errorists; the one to question the authority of the writing, the other to acknowledge the authority and pervert the meaning. Marcion followed one course with St. John's Gospel, the other with St. Luke's: his testimony to the currency of the writings is good in either case. The Valentinian Ptolemy found it more convenient to accept the record of John, and explain away his words. Now, the errorists lived at a time when the Gospel of John, if it was not written by the apostle, must have just been foisted upon the Church; when the question as to its genuineness and authenticity must have been altogether an open question; and undoubtedly we should have from them the most positive asseverations as to the real state of the case. There was just that division of opinion which favors the cause of truth. Instead of altering a spurious document which makes against us, we set about to show that it is spurious. Instead of contenting ourselves with a simple rejection of its claims, we appeal to the acknowledged fact, that the claim is a novelty and preposterous. Spite, then, of the silence of one of the most ignorant of the bishops of antiquity, and because of the opposition of some of the most wrong-headed of the early dogmatizers and reasoners of this world, we accept the decision of the Christian Church as expressed by Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Irenæus

of Lyons, and Origen, the greatest scholar of Christian antiquity, that the Gospel called the Gospel of John was written by the beloved disciple of Jesus.

We should be glad to go beyond our purpose, and make an exhibition of the internal evidence in support of the Johannean authorship. We cannot close without adding a very few sentences in this direction, chiefly for the purpose of inviting the reader to study the Gospel for himself, that he may learn from the thing written who the writer must have been; and how scarcely honest, to use no stronger language, he must have been if he was not the Apostle John. As an eye-witness he presents himself to us; and the narrative is full of incidental particulars, which, if they did not come from an eye-witness, must be ascribed to a very ingenious writer of fiction, and can hardly be reconciled even with the very easy literary conscience which Tübingen accords to the New-Testament authors. Why is one of the disciples characterized in this book simply as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," unless the author intended in this way to describe himself, and to avoid giving his name? M. Rénan, indeed, would have us believe that John wrote his Gospel because the other evangelists had not made enough of him; but we have yet to learn of the first person who shares this opinion of M. Rénan. All the way along there are particularities: descriptions of gestures; turnings-about; beckonings with the hand; interchanges of looks; postures of the body; assertions of personal observation and recollection; details of evidence, as in the case of the blind man; discriminations in the drawing of characters, very real if not singularly artificial, as in the stories of Martha and Mary; testimonies to deep emotion, which, if they are not very honest and simple, are sadly disingenuous, — these, and the like, all pointing to and requiring the eye-witness. The book is manifestly the work of one writer, and of one who dwelt in the midst of the persons and the scenes that employ his pen.

One word more as to the alleged impossibility that such discourses as are contained in this Gospel could have been received and given forth by a fisherman of Galilee. First,

We have no reason to conclude that this son of Zebedee was an illiterate man. Known unto the high priest he certainly was, and able to get access to the palace. Moreover, have we not a right to look for the greatest and the deepest things from the chosen friend and bosom-companion of our Lord and Saviour? Why should there not have been one soul sufficiently receptive to be made the teacher of the Master's profoundest word; the evangelist of the absolute Wisdom; the apostle of the Mediator? Why should not the promised Spirit have taken of the things of Christ, and shown them unto John, so leading him, towards the close of his earthly life, into all truth,—truth which he never fully received whilst the Master was visibly with him? If we make Christianity the outgrowth of the times, the crystallization of a certain collection of rich but unorganized elements, then we may well subordinate persons, even the great Person of all; but, if it came to us through the Son of God and his chosen instruments, then we may look for men, who, because they spake and wrote only what was given to them, exceeded all ordinary human measures and expectations, and became lights of the world for all time.

The marvellous Gospel was written by some one: few will question that it is from a single hand. Was that some one the nearest of all the disciples to the Lord, or some unknown person, whose work gradually stole into the Church? Why should it be thought a thing incredible, that a fisherman should become an evangelist, and report the highest things, when we recall what miracles the Lord has wrought in our world during these last eighteen centuries?

In these few paragraphs, we have aimed at no originality; but we believe that nothing has been set down which is not abundantly sustained by authorities that few will venture to challenge. In closing, we wish to acknowledge the aid which we have received in our humble purpose from an admirable paper upon the subject by the Rev. Professor George P. Fisher, of Yale College. It will be found in the "Bibliotheca Sacra" for April, 1864.

E.

HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

XXV.—FOR EASTER.

"AUFERSTANDEN, AUFERSTANDEN."

[BY C. C. STURM. FOUND ONLY IN RECENT BOOKS.]

Melody,—*"Sollt' ich meinem Gott nicht Singen."*

CHRIST is risen, Christ is risen,
 He by whom we're reconciled;
 See how God from pang and prison
 Has with honor crowned his Child.
 Now enthroned there with the Father,
 Over pain and death set high,
 Reigns he in his majesty.
 With your prostrate homage gather,
 For he life immortal gives.
 Hallelujah! Jesus lives.

He is risen, sing ye praises,
 Who his blood on Calvary spilled;
 Shout it loud in farthest places;
 What he promised he fulfilled.
 Who withstands? And why dissemble?
 See him mount in glorious worth;
 Bright in triumph breaks he forth.
 See how Hell's black portals tremble,
 As the Conqueror at them drives.
 Hallelujah! Jesus lives.

Us from death-doom to deliver,
 Sank he in the grave's dark night;
 Us to raise to life for ever,
 Rose he through the Father's might.
 Death, thou art in victory swallowed,
 All thy terrors overblown;
 All thine Empire overthrown;
 Life is now achieved and hallowed.
 Though the Spoiler still bereaves,
 Hallelujah! Jesus lives.

To the Father he ascended,
 Lifting man from death's domain.
 Life that's in him spent and ended
 Tastes and sees that death is gain.
 Hold amidst your pain and pleasure
 Jesus Christ in memory,
 Loosed from death's captivity.
 His are joys beyond all measure,
 Who for heavenly prizes strives.
 Hallelujah ! Jesus lives.

Children of the great Renewer,
 Joy in him with thanks and song ;
 Bring to him, the Death-Subduer,
 Crowns that to such name belong.
 Praise him in the hours of trial,
 Then when Sin and Misery threat ;
 Praise him in the mortal sweat ;
 Give his great call no denial,
 Who the outcast soul receives.
 Hallelujah ! Jesus lives.

 XXVI. — EASTER TIME.

"AUF, IHR CHRISTEN, LASST UNS SINGEN."

Melody, — "Wachet auf! ruft uns die Stimme."

UP, ye Christians, join in singing,
 And praises to our Saviour bringing ;
 For risen is the Conqueror.
 Lo ! his march is now undoubted,
 And all the powers of Death are routed ;
 Lo ! open is the sepulchre.
 O fair and glorious beam !
 O joy in fullest stream !
 Hallelujah !
 With hero might
 He wins the fight,
 And scatters all the hosts of night.

Though inheriting corruption,
 Yet now we see our great adoption ;
 And death is but life's opening door.
 Now that Jesus has the better,
 Broken is the spoiler's fetter ;
 We go to Him who went before.
 The body wastes at death ;
 The spirit feels no scath.
 Hallelujah !
 From pain and fate
 Emancipate,
 We enter our divine estate.

N. L. F.

LIFE IN SECLUSION.

"Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness!"

THE TASK, book ii.

WE have found the lodge for which poor Cowper sighed,—
we, dear reader, denoting a company of three or four, who, in
 the last summer, led by friendly guidance, sought a breathing-
 place among the mountains of New England. And in a time
 when so many

"Rumors of oppression and deceit,
 Of unsuccessful or successful wars,"

fill the air, it may be pleasant, if only by way of contrast, to
 turn the eye on a picture of secluded life, which, I must think,
 is rarely equalled, or indeed approached, in this stirring land
 of ours. The throng of summer tourists, happily, for the
 most part, know not the place ; and I dare not, even now, in-
 dicate its boundaries too precisely, lest this hive of sweetness
 be rifled before its time. I tremble at the thought of any
 sacrilegious invasion of these mountain solitudes. Spare it
 yet awhile, ye ruthless and unsympathizing multitudes, who
 could only come to destroy all its peculiar charm ! There is
 room for but a few, and more than few would leave it no
 longer what it was. Is it then selfish for those few to wish to

guard this sanctuary, and keep it to themselves, when all its sacredness must disappear at the trample of many feet, and the sound of many and discordant voices? To people the wilderness, is, of course, to change its essential character; but since I forebode the time as not far distant when my "happy valley," too, must yield to the necessities of civilization, as well as to the insatiable demands of the itinerant pleasure-seeker, I am anxious to rescue from utter oblivion these remains of retirement, now almost the last of their kind. "Story" I have none to tell: a sketch is all that I aspire to; and that, without the accompaniment of the pencil, can only be of the most modest pretensions.

Three thousand feet above the sea-line there is an open space of some thirty or forty acres of cleared land, completely walled in by mountains, which are clothed with a shaggy and unbroken forest. The wall is of the grandest and most insurmountable character; and were one to be let down into this enclosure, from the upper air, he might well deem himself a prisoner here for life, if he did not rather congratulate himself on having found a temple, not made with hands, wherein he was to be a glad and grateful worshipper for all time. On a closer inspection, however, one perceives that some outlet is possible, and that the wall is not quite continuous. Its ever-varying outline, attaining its extreme height at the north and south of the valley, dips down so much towards the southwest, that it seems no superhuman feat to climb out that way. We, not having entered this seclusion by the aerial passage I have supposed, but by the more ordinary mode of terrestrial conveyance, knew very well that this south-western dip does indeed mark the solitary road by which ingress or egress is obtained. Through that alone, all communication with the outside world goes on. No visitor takes this valley *in transitu*. He comes either to stay, or to return as he came; for there is no passage beyond. Here one feels that the very end is reached, though it would be rather ludicrously described as "the jumping-off-place," when every jump would involve a spring of one or two thousand feet. There may be a higher mountain-wall elsewhere, and there may be quite as absolute

enclosure ; but the unique feature of our valley I suppose to be just this, — that there is no thoroughfare here. A special pilgrimage must be made to this spot : it is a shrine whose doors are open only to those who have come here for this exclusive adoration.

Of human dwellers within this cleared area, there are not enough to entitle it to the name of village. It is better designated as a hamlet ; for you can hardly discern more than seven blue wreaths ascending in the morning air to indicate the habitations of man ; and these seven dwelling-houses, with their barns, constitute, with two exceptions, all that human hands have built here. The valley owns no shop or inn or church. One neat little schoolhouse alone testifies to some higher interest than mere shelter ; and one lonely bowling-alley is a reminiscence of the hotel, whose crumbling foundations may be traced hard by. This hotel, which had barely a year's existence, threatened to make a direful change in the quiet seclusion. It was to be the occasion of a new road being opened through the forests, and had already added more than a hundred to the summer residents of the valley. But one June night, when preparations were nearly ready for the new guests, a fire broke out in the upper rooms, and could not be extinguished till it had made a total wreck of all that was combustible, and only the granite substructure remained to tell the tale. As no other cause could be assigned for the disaster, it was, of course, believed to be the work of some human incendiary ; but I would rather suppose that the offended spirits of the place, resenting the desecration of their mountain-home, fanned the breeze, if they did not even apply the torch which lighted the conflagration. At any rate, no attempt has since been made to provide a "public house" for the visitors. They are lodged, as we were, in the farmhouse, which I will presently attempt to describe. But of the valley itself I should not omit to say more particularly how perfect its solitude is. From morn to eve, and from eve to morn, no sound is heard to remind one that there is any thing beyond these guardian hills, save the rare sound of carriage-wheels, which announces their approach from afar. No railroad whistle, with its fright-

ful scream, ever reaches our ears ; no distant hum of busy life can cross these grand old mountains. Except for the occasional mail, — for even that is no regular occurrence, — we should not know there was any war ; and, even as we read of the fearful carnage on some distant battle-field, it requires a lively imagination to conceive of it as a thing which we have any part in, or which could, by any possibility, penetrate as far as this. In the presence of these venerable forms of stability and repose, we can hardly admit so much as a thought of strife and distraction. We fancy that the fiercest band of soldiers would no sooner enter this peaceful seclusion than they would be compelled to throw down their arms for very awe and shame. Yet it must not be supposed that we had really *forgotten* the war for a moment, or that our patriotism had cooled because it found no active exercise. Sometimes, I must confess, a throb of pain came over me, to think that this inactivity was of my own choosing. What right had I to stand aloof from my country in arms ? How dare I take my ease here, and pass my days in reverie and contemplation, and give myself up to the enjoyment of simple nature, when every man is needed to interpose between his country and ruin ? “To arms !” — my conscience will not let me be deaf to that cry, though forests and mountains shut it out ever so carefully. Ah, yes ! I hear it ; but, without making my confessions to the public, it is enough to say that a stern necessity forbade me literally to obey that cry. I must sadly feel that it was not meant for me ; and my retirement to this mountain hamlet was therefore no abstraction from the national defence. I could in some way be a gainer, and my country be no loser. But, though no noises from the world beyond the hills ever invaded our retreat, it was by no means absolute stillness here. The tinkling of the cow-bells, the lowing of the oxen, the cheerful sounds from the barnyard, the scream of the blue-jay, the cawing of the crow, the occasional burst of merriment from children, the still rarer ring of the axe or the hammer, or other implement of human toil, — these were pleasant indications that we were not buried, if secluded. “The mighty world of sound” was ours yet. The forests had their myste-

rious voices, and many a coming shower was announced by the pattering on a million leaves long before a drop fell at our feet. No sound was disturbing: every thing we heard tended rather to tranquillize the spirit; and for one weary of care and work, whether of the hands or the brain, I can hardly imagine a more admirable place. We had no excitements, and we wanted none. Possibly—so sophisticated does one become in the midst of civilization—we might have ventured to think of it as “dull,” had it been our constant abode; but, for a few weeks or months, we were satisfied, far more than satisfied, with the resources which this valley contained within itself. We had scarcely a craving which this mountain solitude could not fill.

Not all of our life, however, was spent in pure Nature. Man had provided a shelter more reliable for poor civilized creatures, as we were, than the overhanging rock or the canopy of green leaves. It would be leaving out one of the most picturesque features of our landscape, were I to say nothing of the farmhouse where we were lodged. Imagine, then, a long, low dwelling fronting the south, and putting on its best face to those who should first approach it; for on the front alone had any embellishment of color been attempted. Originally, this had been a bright red with white facings; but time had mellowed its brilliance: and now the house, with its appendant outbuildings doubling the extent of the line, seemed the natural product of the soil, and almost coeval with the rocks and woods. You could fancy that it had gradually ripened into its present bloom; that, turning constantly towards the meridian sun, it had caught something of his glow, and learned to smile and blush its welcome to the coming guests. Unconscious of any style of architecture, it suggested no impertinent comparison with Gothic or Italian prototypes. No servile imitation had ruled in its construction. Its three dormer windows were not intended to be picturesque; they were simply the most convenient way for introducing light through the roof. The quaint barn, also, with its enclosed yard and its innumerable sheds, had never proposed to itself to be remarkable; and yet every travelling artist loved

to sketch its irregular outline, and thought he had seen nothing of the kind in the whole region more interesting for his pencil. Three doorways of the house, also looking southward, hinted at a generous hospitality. One of these led to the more modern addition of parlor; one opened directly, without the intervention of "entry," into the dining-room; and the third, of much ampler proportion, gave admission at all times, without so much as raising a latch, to the freedom of "the shed," as that was called, *par excellence*, which connected the house with the barn. This shed was the favorite after-dinner resort of the loungers of the household, who wished to be exempt from even the slight show of restraint which the word "parlor" might imply. Here one could indulge in the luxury of a tipped-back chair, while puffing the fragrant weed, or could lie prone on the rough carpenter's bench which flanked the shed, or could sit in quiet contemplation of the southern mountain-wall, or could listen to the anecdotes and adventures of an elderly gentleman, a long-time frequenter of our hamlet, whose piscatory skill supplied our table with abundant trout, and who was so wonted to an open-air life, that we could seldom entice him into the urbanities of the parlor; the airy shed being the nearest approach to shelter, which, in warm weather at least, he could endure. The hospitality which these doors suggested was no lying promise. We found it amply fulfilled. And yet, on our first approach to this quaint old place, when our eyes had curiously searched each dwelling-house as our possible abode for many weeks, it was with a kind of dismay that we found our driver at last turning his horses hitherward. I can liken it to nothing but my first experience with a canal-boat; the same ominous doubt now as then depicting itself in blank looks. How to find room for the half of us! It was only a new lesson how appearances may mislead. In reality, we were but a small proportion of the whole household; and yet no night found any unpillowed head. Nor did we cease to marvel, as long as we staid, where every new-comer was "stowed." We only knew that none apparently were turned away. But, if we had uncomfortable questionings as to the capacity of the

house, we had none at all as to the hospitality of our entertainers. The pleasant smile with which our hostess welcomed us in was only a fitting prelude to the attractions of the hospitable board, with its snowy table-cloth, its delicious bread and butter, its piles of fresh berries, which graced our first evening meal. All that kindness of heart and neatness and skill and unstinted generosity could furnish was ours day after day. There was never any falling off, either in our fare or our welcome. That cheerful face which met us at the threshold never became less cheerful; and the most fastidious appetite had never far to seek in that abundant variety. I neither saw nor heard any grumbling while we were there. In addition to the other agreeable features of our dining-room, we had, as the cooler days and evenings came on, the cheerful blaze of a wood-fire in the most capacious of fire-places. On the slightest pretext, it was our custom to call for this — to us — rare privilege; and it was always most willingly bestowed. Wood could not be made dear there: it cost nothing but the sturdy axe to fell it, and the patient oxen to bring it to our doors. War or no war, these forests bore ever the same market-value; for, to a merely economical eye, the sooner they were consumed the better. It was pleasant to find how much the cheerfulness of this wood-fire was appreciated by the inmates, as well as by the guests. As for the latter, I trust each one went away, as I did, with a deeper abhorrence of the abomination of stoves, and an inward resolution, that the last thing to be sacrificed to poverty should be an open fire. When all other efforts to keep a real fireside fail, I mean to come up to these mountain-retreats, and spend my last days within sight and hearing of that crackling blaze.

We were not the only guests, as I have already intimated, in this mountain-home; and no description of our life here could be complete without some notice of the human side of it. By priority of residence, as well as for his marked personality, the old gentleman already referred to deserves the first place in our regard. He seems to have been nearly coeval with the original clearing; drawn hither by a pure love of unsophisticated nature and mountain-air and brook-trout.

Izaak Walton, I am sure, would not have been ashamed of his zealous disciple. The denizens of the mountain-streams must have found some peculiar fascination in their lover, so copiously did they resort wherever his lines were cast. I am not quite prepared to defend the piscatorial art from the charge of cruelty; but certainly this gentle lover of the sport could not have been seriously injured in his humaner instincts. No thought of cruelty, I venture to say, ever shaded that honest countenance. He was no recluse, though preferring Nature to cities. He loved to talk with those who sought him out; and no authority was so reliable as his concerning the woods or mountains or their various inhabitants. Rarely, as I have already said, was he to be found in "the parlor;" but in the cooler evenings, when "the shed" became less agreeable, his place was by the cheerful fireside of the dining-room. There, inspired by the ruddy glow and welcome roar, he was ready to tell us of his encounter with bears or other natives of the forest, or to expatiate on the charms of this free mountain-life, or to describe the various aspects and advantages of the country in different seasons; for he was here not in the summer only, but often preferred the winter, too, before any vicinity to the seaside or the larger cities: and we found, to our astonishment, that the inhabitants of the place also agreed in regarding winter as their most delightful season. While we were disposed to pity them for their exclusion from the comforts and gayeties of city life in winter, they only smiled at our ignorance, and assured us they lacked neither gayety nor comfort. In fact, it was peculiarly their season of pleasure, to which they looked forward as the recompense for summer toils. Abundant and even falls of snow made sleighing always easy; and many were the social parties and entertainments going on, though the guests came, some of them at least, from ten miles off. Not all of our guests were as noteworthy as this old gentleman; and it would be tedious, should I attempt to describe them one by one. They seldom came singly, but more usually in pairs or larger companies. One group from the neighborhood of our metropolis had sought refuge here from another boarding-house but a short

distance off, where the fare had proved too scanty and poor to be borne any longer. Our capacious farmhouse was not quite equal to receiving them as lodgers; but they were admitted to share our abundant table, to which they made pilgrimages three times a day. It was quite a variety in our still life; for there were three or four grown-up people, and as many more children, besides a charming young school-girl. The children, in addition to those who were occupants of the house, made of themselves an interesting group, with very decided individualities. On Sundays it was somewhat difficult to confine them within the strict limits which parental authority prescribed; for children are never born Puritans; and once a sweet little girl among them, who, for some imaginary offence (for she was incapable of any real one), seemed to have been committed to the stricter custody of her Irish nurse, was overheard to remonstrate in most pathetic tones against any further infliction of the reading of the Bible: "Please, Nora, don't read any more, and I *will* be a good girl." I do not wish to intimate that my little pet had any aversion to Holy Writ in itself: she only manifested the torment of a sensitive ear to the dolorous tones of those Irish recitations. The young nurse was evidently proud of an accomplishment so rare for one of her race, and never dreamed, I suppose, that her young charge, of whom she was very fond, did not receive as much delight in hearing as she herself had in reading. The brother of this child, too, — a little older than she, — was of a spirit, I fear, too restless and inquiring for the peace of Puritan parents. It seemed to be a sore puzzle to him to reconcile maternal infallibility with the liberty which others, apparently as wise as his mother, allowed themselves in the use of recreations, and more especially of card-playing. How could such good people tolerate a thing which was evidently of the Devil, and which was sure to lead to murder, and all sorts of horrible crimes? Poor little fellow! He could get small comfort from us in solving his perplexities. We pitied him for his premature introduction to the mazes of casuistry; but we could not in conscience advise any departure from a mother's law.

But, though some of our guests were of the older New-England theology, there were others who had been brought up in a very different school; and naturally, between the new and the old, arose at times some sharp discussions: yet seldom, I think, were such decided convictions maintained with so little of unkindly or impatient feeling. We could argue without bitterness, even if not without some excusable warmth. I trust those most inclined to be bigoted may have learned some new lesson of charity, in seeing that opinions which they lamented, and even abhorred, were held in connection with a life which they could not but approve. At any rate, they gave practical evidence of such charity in attending the Sunday religious services which were held in the little schoolhouse of the hamlet; for the officiating minister was of a sect which most of his hearers must have deemed heretical. And, having alluded to this church-service, I must not let it pass without an attempt to convey the impression it made on some, at least, of those present. The schoolhouse, thus temporarily consecrated, could hold about forty persons. It was a perfectly simple structure, neatly painted on the outside, and adorned within for the occasion by pretty branches and wreaths of evergreens, with a sprinkling of brighter colors. The teacher's desk became a pulpit; the rather hard and narrow school benches were our pews; and a few kind-hearted women, with occasional help from a male voice, constituted our choir. For hymn-books, we had mainly to trust to our memories, as not more than two could possibly be collected. There was, of course, no "church-going bell" to summon us together; but, at half-past five of the clock, the sparse inhabitants of the little valley could be seen slowly wending their way towards this "modest house of prayer," even more deserving of that epithet than "Wytheburn's," as I have seen it at the foot of Helvellyn: for here were mountains compared with which Helvellyn is hardly more than a hillock, and in presence of which St. Peter's dome would be an impertinence. The least of man's work that could be obtruded here was best; and we had the least. To one rightly attuned to sacred harmonies, it was worship all the way that led to our diminutive temple.

How could we help "lifting up our eyes unto the hills," and above them to the Eternal? Silence deep and tender brooded over all the scene: it was the every-day seclusion more intensified. We had come up into these heights to be alone with God, — alone, and yet not utterly without human society and human works. We entered the place of worship: it had indeed no solemnity of its own, no dim religious light, or any other external sanctity; but, bethinking ourselves *where* it was and what we were, we required little else to prepare us for a reverent posture of the spirit. Of the services, little need be said, but that they seemed to have struck an answering chord in many of the worshippers; as none, I think, were disposed to critical or harsh judgment. With the parting benediction, we went out once more into that vast temple of living green, of lofty dome, of massive and time-worn rock, which met our eyes in all directions. We felt it more than ever a temple now. The hour of worship in that little enclosure had prepared us to acknowledge a Presence whom the heaven of heavens could not contain. Already the sun was setting behind the hills, and the evening shadows fell soothingly on our spirits. We thought the day of rest could nowhere close more appropriately.

But I have not yet done with our fellow-guests in the mountain farmhouse. It is curious to observe the commingling of diverse elements in such a place. Not only did extremes of theology meet here, but various political shades, and many differences of education and social position. A few, but very few, fortunately, of the *nouveaux riches* found their way to our table; but even they had generally the good sense to perceive how absurd would be any display of wealth in these primitive rural retreats. The finery they had brought with them was usually kept, as we heard one lady confess, at the bottom of their trunks. There were no natives to "astonish" here. Two captains from the army, whose term of service had expired, brought their wives with them to participate in our mountain cheer; and finer proportioned men or manlier faces one seldom sees. The manliness, too, was attended by its usual accompaniment, — modesty. They had no boasting

stories to tell, no fierce hate to pour out ; but, when any disparagement was put upon the nation's cause, they were ever ready to defend that cause by a prompt word, as they had been on the battle-field by brave deeds. It was refreshing to hear from one of them, who had been made prisoner, that the rebels are not all insolent and cruel to the hated "Yankees." He gratefully bore witness, that not a word or look or deed from his captors had been other than courteous and respectful ; while he did not pretend to draw the conclusion, that the stories of cruelty in other quarters towards our poor prisoners had been exaggerated. The event of our day in this secluded hamlet was the arrival, towards evening, of the somewhat irregular mail from the village of C——, ten miles distant ; and with the mail came sometimes a human freight. The sound of the wagon-wheels could be heard in the still air far down the valley ; and, as it neared in the deepening twilight, we strained our eyes to catch sight of the possible new-comers. In this way, one evening, there dropped down upon us quite suddenly two friends of mine, whose familiar voices greeted me from the approaching wagon before I could make out any of their features. They had both been my fellow-travellers in foreign parts ; and very pleasant was it to meet them here, where I knew they would find the spirit of the place so entirely congenial to them. I was not disappointed in their admiration : they were dear lovers of the woods and mountains, and ready for any tramp that might be proposed. Few of our guests, too, enjoyed the seclusion of the place so much as they. Both of them were men of rare refinement of taste, and purity of character : one of them, an ardent naturalist ; the other, more especially a devotee at all poetical shrines. The latter was seldom without his pocket "Shelley" for a companion ; and the burden — sometimes too prolonged — of his conversation was a lament for the absence of all imaginative elements in American history and life. While I was sometimes vexed at this monotone, I could not but agree with him as to the testimony he adduced ; and yet my optimism protested at the folly of brooding over that which was absolutely irremediable. I must, however, do him the justice to say,

that, though almost bigoted in his admiration of England and her literature, he had also a hearty admiration for the *people* of America, and a sincere contempt for all aristocratic forms of government. His companion, with whom I had once traversed the Bernese "Oberland," differed from him not more in years than in nearly all the prominent features of his character. European travel had apparently not obliterated a single patriotic preference any more than it had spoiled his simplicity and purity. He viewed life not so much from the æsthetic as the moral side; and this was the key to most of the peculiarities of his character. But the two friends, though unlike, had travelled in perfect harmony, many a day and month together, at home and abroad. They knew each other's weak points perfectly well, and yet entertained for each other a very sincere respect and admiration. I was truly sorry that other engagements made their stay so short.

Besides these fellow-boarders, we had occasional guests from the more populous neighborhood of C——; parties of pleasure, who came up for the day, to visit the curiosities of this region, and enjoy a loftier position among the mountains. It was pleasant to witness their enjoyment. They came, for the most part, in large wagon-loads, with quite a sprinkling of young people, and always a decided preponderance of the fairer sex. These last often wore a costume suited to a tramp among these wild forests; and, as they wound slowly up the hill on their way to the Cascades, nothing could have been more charmingly picturesque than their brilliant colors. On their return from such excursions, towards the latter part of the day, they were not loath to sit down, with keener appetites and heightened color, to the tempting viands which our accommodating hostess was ready to spread out for them at any hour. They did ample justice, we may be sure, both in word and deed, to the delicious cream and other delicacies which our host had provided with unstinting liberality. These transient visitors sometimes bore a name of world-wide renown, and were nearly always of the more cultivated class, who came hither because they truly loved Nature in her simplicity; for it was one of the great privileges of our position that we had

nothing whatever to attract the merely fashionable and frivolous. One must have been ready to die of *ennui* here, who was dependent on numerous or gay society, or who did not heartily enjoy mountains and woods and streams and leisure and books. The test was soon applied: one knew in a very few days whether his love of Nature was something affected or real; but, to those who could stand this test, the aspect of the world without was so far from monotonous or dull that they learned some new variety every day. And of that variety I must take some note now, before quite finishing my sketch.

The mountains themselves were never the same any two mornings that our eyes opened upon them. The nearest approach to monotony occurred for the first few days after our arrival, when a deep veil of smoke allowed only a few dim outlines to be visible. But even this was not absolute sameness: now and then, the veil would be slightly lifted from a peak here and there; and our imagination was constantly on the alert to fill out the deficiencies of sight. But who shall tell the joy of beholding the unveiled glory of this mountain amphitheatre? What a fresh delight to watch the contest of sun and shadow over those huge and broken surfaces! How we rejoiced in continual discovery of some new ravine or gorge, which a sudden burst of sunshine would betray on the mountain-sides! And then, at other times, what pleasure to follow some fleecy cloud, putting forth an arm, or a delicate finger even, to assist it in climbing to the mountain-top! Or again: after a storm, what spectacle in the plains could compare with those cloud-capped summits? — the clouds fashioned after the model of those exquisite volutes which the winter's wind carves out of the snow, on the farmer's fences and before his doors. And surely I must not leave out of this description the beautiful effect of the coming-on of "sober evening mild." Who knows what mountains are, or what evening is, who has not beheld them in their conjunction? How grand and solemn the twilight that settles slowly down upon us from these serene altitudes! How unspeakably awful the mountains as they gradually retire into the mystery and secrecy of

night! Ah, well! I will not quarrel with those who love old ocean best; but I rejoice to know that all the richest spiritual analogies are borrowed, not from outspread plain, but from majestic and towering height. The mountains are, of course, the great visible Presence in our seclusion; but they are far from being all. We had the purest of Alpine streams, whose babbling I was never weary of listening to, whose coolness was equally refreshing for external and for internal use. On the hottest days, — and there were very few that could properly be called hot, — one had only to walk a few rods, through a pleasant pasture, and he would soon reach my favorite brook, where, half-way across to the opposite bank, he might comfortably seat himself on some huge boulder, and bid defiance to heat or insects, while the delicious breeze overhead made harmony with the running waters beneath. But, if one would see what beautiful part the brook *could* play, he should take a two-miles' ramble to the Cascades already referred to. Here the water tumbles over five or six successive shelves of rock into as many basins below, and each time with a difference; and all so exquisite that one spends hours there, and is loath to come away. All is indeed on no very grand scale; but the proportions and "keeping" are so admirable, that one does not feel the want of grandeur. The rocks alone are a study for any pencil: now scooped out, by the attrition of the waters, into smooth oval basins; now piled up into regular masonry; now overhanging some deep dark pool, so thickly shaded that its depth can only be conjectured; now beautifully relieved by clinging mosses or slender shrubs and trees. But water gives life to all this scene, and charms the ear as well as the eye. It is also the habitation of a few shy trout, whom the persuasive arts of a skilful angler can entice into the upper air, to add a new grace to the rural repasts which crown the excursions thither. For here all "picnics" tend; and sometimes more than one excursion party has had its "nooning" here at the same time. Nor is it water and rocks alone that furnish this woodland inn. The forests must not be left out of our catalogue. We can never be out of their sight here; but the true pleasure is to be *in* them, wandering

through their mazes, lost in their trackless depths, exploring their endless wonders. Here is a history which antedates all human experience. Who may tell how many ages have been required to deposit these deep layers of vegetable mould, before the present growth of trees sprang into existence? Who can reckon the years in which these myriads of prostrate trees have been decaying? And where else does one find a more beautiful illustration of the manner in which death ministers to life than we see here in the lovely mosses, lichens, and ferns, which so speedily cover up all the unsightly dissolution? Here are *primitive* forests, indeed! No hand of man has intruded upon Nature's work. As the tree falleth, so it lies for untold generations. And then what fantastic forms this undisturbed growth assumes! On the way to the Cascades, we pass by quite a curiosity called "Elephant Rock," a gigantic boulder, of many tons' weight, on the very summit of which grows a tree of no inconsiderable dimensions, with roots extending in all directions to the ground. These roots firmly clasp the rock, and must, of course, have found their way to the soil originally through some covering of moss or earth, which has since been washed away, and left the rock bare. And this is but one of innumerable instances of the sort in which these forests abound. No wonder the woods are the abodes of mystery! We cannot repress a feeling of awe in entering them, and would scarcely be surprised were we warned off as intruders. Of all *secluded* life, theirs is the deepest and most intense.

W. S.

THE priest hath *no* power to forgive sin, it standeth not in his own might and power, the might is in the *ordinance* of Christ: Christ in man, and so far also as he is in the priest himself, *forgiveth* sin to the repenting conscience. The absolution is but a *medium*; viz., an outward sign thereof, that we should receive one another in love and hearty forgiveness, and bind and reconcile ourselves in the love of the bands of Christ, in his *bride*, and in love receive one another into the *communion* of the body; viz., of the *bride of Christ*. — *Behmen*.

THE STAMP OF SIN.

A SERMON BY REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE.

GEN. iv. 15: "The Lord set a mark upon Cain."

GENESIS gives us the origin of things. It goes back (and indeed what farther can any record?) "to the beginning." From the Hebrew standpoint, and to the Hebrew mind, it *accounts for* every thing: for light, for the celestial bodies, for animate and inanimate creations, for the institutions of men, for the preservation of a chosen people, for the evil which surrounds us. The problem of evil has always been perhaps the deepest one to mankind. Philosophy has stumbled at it; and even religion, its only explanation, has mourned its existence.

In this discourse we have nothing to do with the origin of evil: in the Bible narrative we have passed by that to the effects; or, to keep present the idea that Genesis accounts for every thing, the origin of the marks of sin men carry with them. Man began his career in mental and moral weakness, slowly groping his way to our present attainments, having had for ages no records, no literature, no standard of morality; and history begins to be written long after life and civilization have been making history. Genesis was not written "in the beginning." It shows a society in many respects far advanced, and the writers or compilers of the book give what seemed to them the true explanation of all the phenomena of life. Already men had noticed the law of cause and effect, that the sinner bore around with him marks of his guilt; and, in the simplicity of that faith which is the beauty as well as the bulwark of the Old Testament, looking with a Hebrew's inspiration to the one God of Israel as the author of every thing, say "the Lord set a mark upon Cain."

Our subject is "The stamp of sin," as it divides itself into these two parts, —

I. The fact that sin stamps its victim.

II. God as the author of the stamp. "The Lord set a mark upon Cain."

I. Every sin leaves its mark upon the sinner. Does that seem too strong a statement? Does it contradict your experience? Would you seek to invalidate it by saying, "Yesterday I did some wrong, but I am sure I show no marks of it; last year, every day's record embraced some evil deed, but I am as gay, as healthful, as before; no one knows I have been doing wrong; I am sure there are no marks of sin on me"? It is not so: having sinned, the God-imposed consequence is, you bear the stamp of it, and you are deceived; *for* it is true, every wrong, be it ever so slight, leaves a mark upon you. This mark may be *inward* or *outward*. Inward first, because it is so in the nature of things. All evil is in its nature the same, just as all life is one and the same principle; but we distinguish the life of the plant, the life of the insect, the life of man: and so we speak of sin against the body, sin against the mind, sin against the Holy Ghost, or God in man. You call to mind the terrible sentence pronounced against the latter: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Take the sins against the body. A finely moulded frame commands our admiration; and, as the anatomist pursues his investigations, at every step he finds new reasons for exclaiming, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" Physiology shows us the stomach is lined with a soft, fine membrane as delicate and tender as a rose-leaf or a violet; but, hidden as it is, how we sin against it! how we mar it by intemperance of every kind! And the vital force of nature is used up in working off or repairing the effects of every injury until our bodies are worn out, and what poor, worthless lives we have led!

You may deny you have sinned against the body; but years or generations prove you have. Unless God made us as a mockery, he meant us to be the noble, healthy men and women I believe we shall one day become; but now it is really a religious duty to speak often and earnestly against the sins of the body. An hour's pain spoils many a happy expectation, — what if it be lengthened out to years of suffering? I know

of no other sin which lies at the door of so many. Do you say it leaves no mark on you? Whither has fled your glow of health? The buoyancy of youth,—where is it? The untiring energy of a vitalized, physical life,—where do we find it? An important part of true religion to-day concerns our health. “We touch heaven,” says Novalis, “when we lay our hand on a human body.” Still all this, all your wrong, may be inward, the stamp unperceived. Then the sin against the mind. The sins against the body are generally of commission; against the mind, of omission,—but sins nevertheless. Much is said of the weakness of intellectual men: they get a great deal of undeserved pity from the admiration a cultivated mind receives from the ignorant; but, for every one who breaks down in fair study, a hundred have to give up from dissipation. Be not too quick in your sympathies for your pale-faced college friend: the chances are, he is suffering from vice, not philosophy. Do you say there is no stamp of ignorance on you? It may not be apparent; but God never gave you a faculty to be improved, and opportunity to do so, without stamping upon you the effect of your neglect. Now as to the sins against the Holy Ghost. The Jews—and with all their faults we must ever love their reverence—would not tread upon the smallest piece of paper: “for possibly,” said they, “the name of God may be on it.” We know that God by his Holy Spirit dwells in each one of us. Christ’s image is in every human body, however lowly. Shall we sin against that spirit? Shall we mar that image? What is our worthless dust without that spirit? Break that image, and is there left any thing fair? Better Jewish superstitious reverence and fear of Jehovah, than our own neglect and heartlessness by which we sin against the Holy Ghost. Does that leave no stamp upon you? Fairer than the glow of the morning light, purer than the dewdrop, more tender than the rose-leaf or the violet, is this soul-life which flows into us from the bosom of our God. Shall worldliness wither it, clouds darken it, passion’s heat dry it up? The body may be coarse, the mind dull; but the soul, the spirit of God, is ever the same. Still all this may be inward, only you may

know it, — sadder than all, you may be so hardened as not to know it yourself; but, I assure you, the stamp of sin is there, and set by the Lord. Do not, I entreat you, because you are still able to conceal all outward marks of your guilt, think you are the less guilty. Do you forget the All-seeing Eye? Listen to a heathen story. A sculptor was employed to erect a statue in one of the Grecian temples, and on being asked why he carved the back part, which was to be let into the wall, with as much pains as the front, replied, “The gods see it.”

We come next to the *outward marks of guilt*. These are often observable to others when you do not think so, or are convinced you are concealing them. I know of no more lamentable sight than of one who bears about with him unconsciously the stamp of sin. It is a wonderful nature God has given to us by which we deceive ourselves so long, fancying sin does not show upon us. One meets these outward marks every day. Men's countenances show more of their inner life, to an observing eye, than they know. I read many a sad life-story in a single glance, which for the world would not have been betrayed. The eye is a window to the soul: “If the light that is *in* thee be darkness.” The stamp of sin most easily observable is the one set on the body. Sin will out. It is easy to distinguish the master most men serve. “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” In one part of our country, where caste is more marked than with us, you tell in a moment the servant by his cringing demeanor, the absence of all self-respect, the consciousness of manhood gone; but, nearer home, I meet a more abject servitude to a more despotic master. See the stamp of sin which passion, sensuality, intemperance, put on a man! — the eye, the mouth, the whole countenance, the walk, the whole body, stamped as with a burning brand. Is it strange, that, when one becomes conscious of this, shame is added to guilt as he meets the knowing glance, and the record of Cain tells all the rest, “His countenance fell”? Be not deceived, poor victim of passion! there are more knowing glances cast upon you than you think; and God's eye saw your first deviation from

the path of virtue, and marked it, before vice led you on and on and on into the whirl of corruption. The image of the sinner is so truly drawn in the story of Genesis! There is Cain with his downcast look, feeling his heavy guilt; and by him stands the Lord, ever ready to come to man in his trouble, and say to him the words of sympathy, "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, dost thou not look up?" as it should be rendered. You know how the face beams, and the head rises, as we feel the reward and boldness of right-doing: yea, even before the Lord God of Israel we can look up, and not fear, if we have done right; but, if we have done wrong, conscience-smitten, countenance-fallen, as the omniscient Eye looks into the inner chambers of the soul, and the omnipotent Arm rises over you, and the all-wise Judge pronounces the awful sentence, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and unto thee shall be his desire; cursed art thou from the earth, a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be; and the Lord set a mark upon Cain." The outward marks of sin come not only from sin against the body. How often, on Change, you can see this stamp on business-men! We wonder at the magnitude of their transactions. We admire the tact, talent, and precision they show, but grow sad as we see sin set its stamp for every deception and over-reaching bargain. When I walk the streets of our thronged city, I mark each one hastening by, — the evil eye, the leering look, the oath, the frivolity, the obscenity, sadness, remorse: oh, the stamp of sin on so many! You see it on ministers, — a false sanctity, a Sunday holiness, a sectarian piety. The unskilled eye goes over the surface of the earth, and sees little variety: but, when the geologist goes along, he finds one formation here, another there; this an outjutting of the Silurian, that of the Devonian; one here of igneous agency, another there of aqueous deposit, — but everywhere something to help his one theory of the earth's formation. So the practised eye goes over men, and finds one sin showing itself here, another there; in this man the successive incrustations of vice, in that the volcanic outburst of passion; here the

depressions where the old fires burned, and there the upheavals of the latest struggle, — but the stamp of sin cropping out of every one of us.

II. God as the author of our punishment. There is a great mystery in this to most persons. Even granting that God is the author of evil, and permits it, it is inexplicable to them that he has so bound events together, we cannot escape the consequences of our guilt. If God is in his very essence goodness and love, it seems unaccountable to them that we must suffer; that with free will to choose the wrong or right, with both open, and inviting us to enter their domain, yet by the predominance of evil, a tendency in many — oh, how almost irresistible! — to the wrong, why is it, a loving, just God stamps upon us the record of our iniquity? I know that many think, in times of despair, — when they yet long to cast off their sins, and realize something of the unalterable laws of destiny, — that if they had God's power, or he had their sympathy, things would be otherwise; and the mystery of godlessness becomes to them equal to the mystery of godliness. To me, the love and mercy of our heavenly Father seem most manifest in that he himself stamps us with the marks of our sin; for, as long as I have faith in him, I know that every one bears the burden of his own sin, and no one is ever stamped amiss. Then, too, I acknowledge His loving-kindness who has given us the only way to escape from sin. I recognize with a grateful heart that God's own hand sets upon me a mark for every sin; and the stamp which Omnipotence has put on, Omnipotence alone can remove. Can a mortal bear the stamp of the Immortal? How the sinner breaks out with the exclamation of Cain, "My punishment is greater than I can bear"! What is that punishment? "Behold, thou hast driven me from the face of the earth!" How all the beauty of Nature is lost to the sinner when every fair grove and every charming sound but re-assure him of his guilt; when the flaming sword turns every way to keep him from the abode of the pure; when the innocence of life lies behind him, and the gates of hope seem to close before him for ever. Can you bear that? But more still. "Behold,

thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid." Oh hour of anguish! oh bitterness of soul, when the sinner feels that his own acts have hidden him from the heavenly Father! To be removed from the face of the earth is little; but to be taken away from the face of God — can you bear that? But more still. One can bear every thing in the present; but the thought of the future comes to him, when death and the unknown of another world press upon him with their terrible fears: then what a moment! "And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." How the sinner fears death! how he stalks among men, and trembles lest they slay him! Can you bear that? Yes: one can bear all that; be driven from the earth, hid from God, brave the future, and live, — living in the fear of death, — the sinner can bear them all; but there is one thing he cannot bear. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold: and the Lord set a mark upon Cain." That is unbearable, — to live among men with the stamp of sin put there by God; to want to die, and have to live; to fear to die, and fear more to live; all safe around us, and the destruction in our own souls: then it is we exclaim, "Our punishment is greater than we can bear." Stern as all this seems, I feel there should be no shrinking back from portraying the fate of the sinner. The first lesson to learn is a bitter one, "The way of the transgressor is hard." No matter what may be the rest of forgiveness, or the raptures of repentance, or the joy of trust, even Omnipotent love does not put you in the same place you would have occupied, had you never sinned, — does not wipe out the effects of sin upon one's memory and soul. But, I am sure, in all this the trusting heart can see nothing but justice and love, — justice ever stern to the erring, and love ever of our heavenly Father.

There is, however, a compensation for all this. Sin afflicts us; but the affliction saves us. When Christ came, he revealed to the world, first, The consciousness of sin; second, The remedy for it. There was evil before Christ came; there was suffering in consequence of it: but a true consciousness

of it came after he had made known the full gift of salvation ; and this consciousness of sin is what makes it all the more terrible. As long as the future life was at best a dim hope in man, sin cast no gloom over him, for it wore no hideous aspect, brought no condemnation ; but when the resurrection of Jesus Christ brought in the full hope of the immortal life, then it was, that death, so dreaded by the ancients, lost its sting, and sin became the only death to be dreaded. Oh, what a cloud then gathered over man, when he found, that, by his own acts, he was deprived of his soul's highest anticipations ! If it is a terrible moment when the soul first begins to feel the presence of God, how much more terrible when it first comes to a consciousness of sin ! This, however, brings its own remedy. I said no man can bear to be conscious of the stamp of sin set by the Lord. When one feels that, then begins the hope, the struggle, towards a new life. The despair of sin has opened the gates of heaven through which, by the love of Jesus Christ, we may enter in, and live and reign for ever.

The stamp of sin is on every one of us. Will you insist upon wearing it around with you ? Will you rest while again and again it sets its mark upon you ? Shun it. Flee from it. While you linger, it sets its stamp upon you. Pluck it out, I beseech you ! Better that it rend you as it goes, better death, better any thing, than sin. It is a strange seducer. It comes like a friend when you sit in your room, in meditation, and knocks at your door ; and, as a friend, you open to it, when, lo ! a legion of demons rush in, and claim you as their own. Learn a lesson from our times ! You have watched the growth of our nation's sin, until to cast it out, threatens our own destruction ; but we must do it, even if our punishment is greater than we can bear. Would that our loved fatherland had come to a consciousness of her destroying sin long ago ! Harshly as the sounds of war fall upon a Christian's ear, the glad sounds of peace can never again be heard until that sin of slavery is swept from our shores, and we look on upon the first unfolding of true freedom's banner. In the West Indies, we read there is a vampire-bat which lights upon

the sleeper, and, as it sucks his blood, fans him with its wings to a deep and deeper sleep of death. Will you lie down and rest, with this vampire-bat of sin draining the last drop of your spiritual life? If the fear of God will not restrain you, let the love of Christ!

Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." But the burden of sin,—who can afford to bear it? who will bend beneath its yoke? who will wear its stamp?

THE FOX AND THE MARMOT.

"THE Fox and the Marmot" is a lesson for bribe-takers. "Whither are you running," says the latter to the former, "without daring to look on either side of you?" "Calumny, calumny!" replies the fox: "I have been driven out as a rogue; but you know whether I rendered justice or not in that poultry-yard. There was nothing to gain there: it was a most ungrateful office. I had no sleep at night, by day I had scarcely time to eat a mouthful; my health was even suffering by it; and after all, through hatred and calumny, I am disgraced. Call me a thief, indeed! I only ask you whether I can be justly accused of the slightest act of dishonesty?"—"Certainly not, my dear friend," is the reply; "but I must say, to my regret, that I have sometimes seen down sticking to your muzzle."

"More than one functionary," says Kriloff in the moral, "complains of his poverty, and declares that neither he nor his wife ever received presents. Nevertheless, in time he builds a villa, and buys an estate. How does he balance his disbursements and receipts? If you wanted to prove before a judge that he had taken bribes, you would find it difficult; yet every one must acknowledge that the down is quite visible round the gentleman's mouth."—*The Russians at Home.*

THE IDEAL LIFE.

THE announcement of spiritual laws is always made with so much brevity and emphasis, that whatever we would say of them in explanation or extension seems altogether inadequate and unsatisfactory. Though they be so suggestive of thought, thought never goes beyond them, but returns upon them like a traveller to his home. There was never yet a paraphrase that equalled the text; for it is the thought which shapes the expression, and makes for itself new and inimitable forms of words. "*Ipsæ res verba rapiunt*:" the things themselves force words to express them. A text is announced; and if it be finely chosen, a fit thought in fit words, the preacher, however far he wanders, presently returns, and gathers up all in that one sentence. He seldom rises higher than this his text; his discourse is like the sweep of a festoon moving in graceful curves from point to point along the level of its elevation.

All writing, speaking, and doing is but the illustration of a few great texts. In music, the greater part of its notes is a commentary on a few finer strains. This, perhaps, is the secret of its refrains, themes, and choruses, to which it returns, as it were, to restore itself, and be helped to new flights. It is our unhappy fate in these days to write sermons: the poet preaches, the novel preaches, and the newspaper. But it is easier and more simple to write texts than sermons. The same is true in music and art: that which is best in them is an inspiration, wonderfully simple, easy, unpretending, and very brief. Brevity is always the measure of the importance and depth of the idea. In action, the ease with which a thing is done is its measure, the token of superiority. The kingdom of God comes not with observation into the composer's, the artist's, the poet's heart, any more than into the saint's. The best things, somehow, say and do themselves. There are long spaces of drudgery or of idleness; days and years when we draw water with bottomless buckets. Yet we feel certain, that when we get into the right train of

thought and of life, when we are in unison with nature and our highest selves, we shall be divinely assisted,—we shall come from the closet into the lighted room.

But the jewel must have its setting, and around our highest life grows a wild waste of the trivial and commonplace. The ordinary life of man is a troubled and broken surface of water: sometimes it falls smooth and still, and there are reflected in it the fleeting shapes of an overarching and mysterious Infinite. In these moments, all our wisdom and learning come back to us. We recover that vantage-ground which we so often gain, and so often lose. The perception of the few simple laws of our being gives us resignation and repose. We become reconciled to suffering, and success does not make us arrogant. We see that we have not attained what we have coveted, because we were not fit; that we have been bereaved of the merit and reward of many noble actions which we have performed, through our own secret pride. The love, the applause, the estate, we have so much desired, are not yet ours, because we have not yet learned to do without them. I figure to myself all the blessings of life as beautiful fairies following man, as, looking ever before him, he moves onward with firm assured confidence in his heart, careless of fame or shame. Hovering closely over his footsteps, they strew his pathway with unexpected gifts; but if he turn to gaze after his benefactors, or pursue them, or linger intoxicated among their offerings, they fly away, and leave him friendless and unblest.

It is in vain to stand waiting, or to pursue. What belongs to us, what by divine right is ours, will follow us, whatever road we take. We need not be uneasy about friends, about advantages of any kind. No power can rob us of what is our own. Soon we shall reach the crossing of the ways; and although deserted, and separated from many things that were dear, yet in the way which lies before us lurk higher destinies and nobler companions, ready to join us when we shall have been abandoned by what was alien and temporary. In our own history, we must wait long periods for results and the award of time. Weeds spring up in a day: virtue and

power are of slow growth, like oaks and cedars. But how often do we forestall and interrupt the growth of a character, for whose formation the times in which worlds and suns were formed are momentary, and, like children, uncover the good seed we have planted, to see how it grows, or pluck a crude and unseasonable fruit! Slowly, silently, as the stars come out one by one in the summer twilight, appear in our characters the effects of our wills and our lives. With unseen perseverance, the spiritual and the ideal are transforming the world,—the inward is becoming the outward, while that which is outward disappears. In our to-day's life, were we skilful enough to read it, is contained the secret history of our whole career. For the day is not a creation, but a growth. Cause and effect do not lose each other in time or space. The effect follows, though far off and unrecognized. It follows to the third and fourth generation,—is only lost, because we have no measure for it,—and, when it does appear, generally reproduces, or represents in some astonishing way, the original cause and conditions. This is that poetic justice of the old tragedy and of the modern romance: it is that discriminating vengeance which Dante and Swedenborg saw so mercilessly executed in the lower worlds. Nothing is more striking in the divine justice than the appropriateness of its rewards and punishments. The cause is never lost sight of. There is always superadded to the legal penalty another exactly corresponding to the crime. This is the case, because God is *present*; and, where he is, justice is. The world, however, is governed so much,—its very existence seems to depend, not so much upon the divine Providence, as upon the detective police,—that we are confused in the attempt to discover the workings of the law of laws. Human governments have a few barbarous and indiscriminating penalties. The divine justice uses the spirit itself. The guilty never escape, the innocent never suffer. It reverses many decisions, precedes precedent, judges the judge. For my part, I should esteem it always safer to be any criminal than any judge.

It is by insight, memory, and imagination, that we are enabled to detect the effects of spiritual laws. We see them

first in ourselves. When seen, they become the guide of life: they are its light when neither the sun nor the moon shines. Then is awakened in us that wisdom which educates us in new subjects, and revises the learning of the intellect. We can enter new fields without apprenticeship; for we have found out our own genius. The impulse to any-performance seems to be equal to the native capacity, not the cultivated. Nature does not seem to help us much, unless she first set us to work. Then we leave off construction and criticism, and begin to live and to create. Man is uneasy, until he gets where the heavens are open to him, and he can work freely and securely. So restless is he, he studies, he travels, he adopts with enthusiasm every new idea and system, tries all employments, and would pass through every form of being. We cannot tell what anybody would do or be, but plainly it is not this his present place. At best, we are adventurers and experimenters; some achieve success at one turn or another; for others it is reserved, who still pursue or learn to wait.

But is there, I believe, beyond this land,
Another land, lighted by larger stars;
Where all I seem to be, but never am,
I shall become, assuming all my lot, —
At whose door I have waited, and not slept.

Thus are we drawn on, instructed as much by what we are not as by what we are. Hope educates us, experiment educates us, and that within us, which has no name, but is most like a germ seeking the light. The child first sees the world from his mother's arms, sees only what is at a little distance and straight before him. Then he turns his head at sights and sounds; he creeps, climbs, walks, runs, must be amused with constant new toys, which, if not given, are found; and each moment, at every step, at every glance, sees a new and curious world, — one vast plaything. The youth and the man keep up the hunt for the new and the ideal. And once having felt their revelation to the soul, enlightening and dilating his whole being, man struggles to come into direct and constant relation with the source of his inward and divine life.

The effects of violation of, or obedience to, this higher life, when at last they are discovered, tend somewhat to the silence and isolation of the individual. He feels that there is no help but in himself, and his joy is equally private and unshared. It puts out of sight his relations with persons and things, his accomplishments and advantages, and carries him forward with powerful impulse in the path of his natural endowments. His development is from within. What he is, and what he is to be, dawns upon him. The meaning of life, the meaning of prophecy and song, of nature and art, dawns upon him. These states do not come by any direct, wilful effort. They discover themselves, and are incapable of analysis or formulary. There must be something in the soul that answers to them, or they must for ever remain unknown and unnamed. The highest truths draw us up into their own region, where we have only to open our eyes to see things as they are. The satisfaction of our natures, purity of life, obedience to intuitions, fit us for their reception. The effort of the soul to realize its aspirations seems all in vain: for a long time, no fulfilment or progress is perceptible; till at once, by what appeared a happy accident, — some random attempt or guess, but which, no doubt, was a divine guidance, — the object is revealed, and we stand in the radiance of a new life. The aspiration must be a prophecy; but it may be answered in a way we had not anticipated, in order, as has been said, to give us something beyond our wishes. We can hardly tell how or when our prayers are granted; and often the fulfilment itself casts a backward light, making us see more clearly what was that secret, undefined longing of the heart. This is what we wanted, although we could not previously describe it. Even in lesser things, we grope after what we want, with a curious feeling of inability to describe it exactly, united with perfect confidence that we shall recognize it when we see it. Balzac desired, for a character in one of his novels, a certain name. What it was he could not catch, thinking hard and long. Yet he knew it as well as the locksmith knows from the lock the key that will fit. At last he called a friend, and bade him lead him through the streets of Paris,

where the signs were most numerous. They walked on for two hours; Balzac's eyes intensely fixed upon the names, his friend guiding his feet. Suddenly he stopped, turned deadly pale, and, pointing his finger, exclaimed, *That's it!* He had found what he wanted. It is with some such feeling that I go to the tailor's, never knowing what I shall wear away; but my eye selects for me, without any trouble of deliberation. The eye, the ear, the taste, determine many things for us without thought, and betray what we are; but the soul is behind all, the atmosphere of our being, through which sun and stars shine, or clouds and storms drift. It is curious to observe the first effect of the revelation of a great truth, whether it come in the form of a thought, an analogy, a discovery, or duty. It makes a man silent. Silence has been called golden; and well may it be called so, when it is the perfect fulness of the mind. Reserve is only iron or lead or emptiness. During thought, there is a peculiar stillness present in us: we hardly breathe. It seems to be a suspension of ordinary conditions; the senses are in abeyance; the soul appears, and becomes the mirror of an unseen and sublime intelligence. Speech comes when inspiration begins to subside, as water flows from a half-emptied bottle more freely than from a full one. On the pavements of my noisy street, the noisiest carts are the emptiest.

The discernment of truth is also attended with certain peculiar confirmations. We see immediately hints and illustrations of it; many things which can be at once classified; all roads seem to converge there, and all that meets the eye to confirm and extend its applications; as when a snatch of song, or strain of music, is running in the head, all the sounds of the workshop and street seem to beat time to it. The power of a thought to marshal all our miscellaneous information, our experiences and random observations, our facts and our note-books, under its banner, is the measure of its depth and truth. We want a string for our beads; a principle which shall connect the beginning with the end of life. We seek an idea so sovereign as to command all intellectual and spiritual acquisitions; a generalization to include the

whole of existence. That idea, that generalization, is God present in the soul of man. This will arrange and subordinate all particulars. It will detect their truth or falsehood. Its prevalence will determine every choice, every secret affinity, and finally will conduct to such a genuine individuality that the philosopher and the critic will be compelled to make a new estimate, a new rule and law for each one of us. Under its guidance, we shall leave all estimates behind, and all description shall be at best only historical. No niche will hold us, be it never so carefully measured. Plaster it up, friends: the statue grows faster than the wall. No one has ever the least success in drawing your inner portrait. It is uncontainable, for ever flowing. God in the soul gives an ever new and fresher life. It cures every mistake and misfortune, despair, grief, loss, by rapidly leaving them behind. Peace, like an angel, hovers over the pathway. Let us adjust ourselves to this inflowing spirit. Then looking inward, as upon an untarnished mirror, we shall have rendered back to us the images of nature, of books, of men, of character and events, with accurate and instructive fidelity.

Obedience to the suggestions of the spirit guides us to our proper place and work in life. If we would allow it, it would willingly and wisely select for us. But now we select for ourselves arbitrarily. Therefore we make no progress: we do not know whether our choice and our work be right or wrong, because we have no witness in our own souls. Another proceeds easily, securely, correctly. He has a test in himself: he knows before he begins. The fingers easily learn to play a harmony already in the ear. A workman brings his block into shape by a few well-directed blows; he has an image in his eye: but the bungler hacks and pounds, every blow requires another to efface its misdirection, till at last his labor is lost, and his own genius violated. How few there are who know how a thing will look when it is finished! but, unless a man does, he need not begin. The presence of this spirit may be detected by many tokens; in friendship, in work, even in play. In conversation, how exactly the speaker oftentimes seems to speak to your experi-

ence, or upon some question which is agitating your mind, in the most wonderful manner, as though God was speaking through your friend or companion! How is it that he can so unconsciously hit the nail on the head, unless by some divine direction? If he knew your thoughts, your perplexities, he could not speak to your case any better, perhaps not so well; for he would no longer be free to the general influence that moulds his words, not for one ear but for all. Your thoughts are in the air, and the speaker entertains them as his own. The sentiment that must be uttered, — sometimes it chooseth one organ, sometimes another. Happy the speaker, happy the listener! Watching the inward emotions, listening to what the soul says, we can hear and detect the divine words in any company, or from whatever speaker. Then it is indifferent to us whether we listen or speak.

Thus we learn to recognize the omnipresence of that spirit which is the fountain of all our being. Slowly do we learn it; slowly come the periods of growth to the human soul, and events keep no pace with our aspirations. Each day we meet in our track the objects of our wishes; objects that seem to be our own, that seem to be what we need for the completion and satisfaction of our natures, and life has little value without them. We approach to embrace them; but they retreat, for ever retreat. Sorrowfully we turn away, well knowing our unworthiness. But some day, while journeying onward, living through many moods and accidents, perchance these ideals will reveal themselves unto us. In the pursuit of some object, apparently quite remote from them, they will confront us, — as Columbus, seeking a short route to the Indies, fell upon a new world.

J. A.

EVERY evil or false desire, whereby a man deviseth how to gather to himself by craft much worldly gain from his neighbor to his neighbor's hurt, is taken into the anger of God, and belongeth to the judgment. Wherein all things shall be made manifest, and every power and essence, every cause and effect, both in good and evil, shall be presented to every one in the mystery of the revelation. — *Behmen*.

MORNING SIDE.

CHAPTER IV. — OUTLOOK.

If, from the facility with which Arthur Ashton's conversation glided into serious subjects, it should be inferred that his spirit and life were of a sombre hue, it would be an entire mistake. A healthy, enjoyable nature was his, uniformly cheerful, and at times bubbling over with fun.

I do not say this in his praise; for the fact, I believe, implies no merit. Some of the chief elements of such a temper are not at our command; such as organization, hereditary dispositions, and health. To see all elements felicitously combined, is a spectacle of enjoyment surpassing most others which the world presents. What a magnetizing influence it has upon all! Is the interest with which we view it an intimation of what each was made for, and will become, when some unhappy obstacle is removed?

I remember that Dr. Paley, or some of those old writers on Natural Theology, whom I read a great many years ago, says, that, for his part, he thinks the greatest proof of the divine goodness is seen in the happiness of a little child: for the enjoyments of maturer life may be, in part at least, of our own procuring; but the pleasures of a child, he observes, are manifestly "provided for it;" an observation, which, I think, may be extended to the case of a man who has naturally a happy temper, for which, if it could be bought, many a millionaire might make a good bargain by giving all he has.

At the same time, Arthur's happiness was greatly promoted by causes which every man may control; such as a wise philosophy of life, and a generous religious faith, which conjured up no bugbears, and was baptized in the spirit of him who said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

I think, moreover, it was much affected by another cause,—his life in the country.

I am quite too old, and have lived too long in the city, to fall into raptures on this point. It is a large world we live in, and a many-sided nature we have; and the Disposer of our lot has wonderfully fitted man for all places and stations he holds. I am not surprised at the preference which so many in all times have felt for the crowded haunts of men; for these have advantages peculiar to themselves.

I know something too—not much—of the saloons of fashion, where wit and beauty, and grace and wealth, and song and dance, offer attractions found nowhere else. Let all these things stand for what they are fully worth. And if we content ourselves by saying simply that the rural shade is clearly one place designed for man, and one which, in importance and dignity need fear no comparison, it may then be added, that in its healthy airs, its wholesome food, its varied exercise, its exemption from extremes of excitement, and its winning power to train every one to the quiet and cheerful order of Nature, it seems to give a deeper and fuller tide of enjoyment than any other lot.

Of Arthur's cheerful outlook on life, perhaps I can give some idea by repeating, as well as I can recall it, a conversation I once heard at his table.

One Sunday, as we were returning from the afternoon service, he asked me to take dinner with him; adding, that I should meet the young minister, whom we had just heard, and who was temporarily supplying the pulpit of our church.

The old New-England fashion here prevailed, of having, on Sundays, the dinner and supper in one meal; and, about five o'clock, we sat down to a table amply provided for its double duty.

At the close of the dinner, when we were all in that placid, dreamy state, which, in summer, a long Sunday afternoon in the country inspires, Arthur repeated the words,—*vanity of human life*, which had just been dropped by some one,—myself, I believe, and then added that he often felt as if it was somehow unchristian to use them.

Minister. — And yet you remember with what emphasis they are repeated in the Bible.

Arthur. — Ah, yes! by the lips of Solomon. Still, does not the value of every general observation like this depend upon the standard of judging applied by the observer? and, till we look to that, is his statement any more exact than that of a man who says the tide is high, without telling us whether it be high as measured by his expectations, wise or unwise, or by what it was an hour before, or by the water-mark of yesterday, or that of the great flood a century ago?

Minister. — The old Hebrew king, I suppose, uttered a profound conviction derived from his own experience; and, if he found the pinnacle of earthly greatness to be vanity, it would seem, that, for a stronger reason, all other places must be so too.

Arthur. — But the point now is, *why* he found life to be vanity. If he expected from it only what it could well yield, need he have been disappointed? You remember the account he gives us as to what his expectations were. There is a great deal said about his building houses, and planting vineyards, and making gardens and orchards, and getting men-singers and women-singers, and gathering silver and gold, and giving his heart to wine, and proving mirth and pleasure. In short, it was a sort of sensual paradise he was aiming at; and because he must leave it all to the men that should come after him, and the wise man must die as the fool, he breaks forth in the exclamation we are considering. Is it strange that life was vanity to him, or that it will be vanity to every one that is like him? And who can regret that it should be? What I regret is, that we forget that the example of Solomon was given for our warning, and so often imagine that the divine Bestower of life can be pleased by this perpetual confession of our disappointment and complaint.

Minister. — But let us use our own eyes, and see for ourselves if life does not assume the aspect of vanity. There is its brevity. What is it? A vapor! — here a moment, and then gone for ever.

Arthur. — As to that, you know that all our notions of time are relative. Threescore years and ten must seem but a span to Him in whose sight a thousand years are as one day; but they would be an enormous duration to an insect that lives but for a summer. Is human life long enough considered with reference to the divine plan of introducing upon the stage of existence the greatest possible number of generations? Is it long enough as the primary school

of humanity? True, we cannot answer these questions: why, then, seem to answer them, and to answer them against the divine wisdom, by complaining of the brevity of life?

I was reading, the other day, the life of one of the poets, — a pure and noble name in English literature; and the biographer who had visited the old Hall, the scene of the poet's labors, remarks upon the impression it gave of the *vanity of human life* to walk through apartments, which, for forty years, had been cheered by his genius, and find his place occupied by strangers.

Now, I am not sure that forty years of a pure and gentle life ought to have left such an impression, nor that it is vanity that the poet had at length been taken up into a higher school, while others are coming, in indefinite successions of forty years, to have the same precious seedtime of enjoyment and opportunity. I think some reflections on the reality and blessedness of human life and hopes would have been more in place. Did not One take upon himself our nature, in order, in part at least, to show us what a holy and blessed thing even a few years of earthly existence may be?

Minister. — But this is but one point. Consider how uncertain is life, and all its possessions. Nothing continueth in one stay. What ups and downs every day! what wrecks of human hopes every moment! I feel that I get a response from man's heart when my sermons present this view of the vanity of human life.

Arthur. — And very good sermons for their final impression, I do not doubt, they are; and perhaps I am wrong in holding this argument with one whose office it is to study these matters deeply. But we understand one another. I am telling you frankly, that I feel that those Old-Testament views of life have too much colored our phraseology. As to what you say of the instability of earthly things, how easy for us to conceive of a condition less mutable! how unsteady these billows on which we are tossed compared with the peace of some ideal repose! But, if it be good for us at present to have these trials, I do not know why we should complain of them, or give them a bad name. If we see inactivity and rust corrupt those whose condition is most unchanged, if we feel that we all require a motive to watchfulness, and a spur to put us up to our best exertions, so that, perhaps of all arrangements of the world, it is this very insecurity which most develops and deepens life, I cannot see the justice of calling that feature empty and delusive, in which a divine wisdom and benignity are so clearly seen.

Minister. — You make me think of a remark made to me by one of your neighbors as we walked from church. He parted from me, and went towards the red house under the hill.

Arthur. — Oh! it was Uncle Ephraim. Well, what did he say?

Minister. — We fell into conversation about the relations of this world to the next; and he said, "A scaffold is a poor thing compared with the house it helps to build, and yet it may be a very good scaffold after all;" and then he laughed as if it was a capital joke.

Arthur. — Ah, that was just like him! Let me also repeat a remark made by another, if I may here reverently quote it. It was uttered a great many years ago. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Why should not our language about life a little more reflect the spirit of words like these, and thus catch that tone of good cheer? I think we have not found enough good cheer in our religion. How I like the words, and how I wish I could have heard them from the lips of Him to whom I allude!

Minister. — But let us go on a little further. Does not this seem a stronger proof of the vanity of human life, that, after all, it satisfies us so little? We all know that no earthly experience fills our capacity of joy. Our highest satisfactions leave a void from which comes the echo that elsewhere there is something deeper and better than they. Of far the larger part of our pleasures, we feel that they are not worthy to be compared with that perfect felicity of which we conceive.

Arthur. — *Perfect felicity*, — was that what you said? When did we learn to dream that the condition of the world, or the nature of man, was intended to yield such a thing? It is true we form a conception of it; and that conception is one of the noblest prophecies we have; a proof that this world is not an end in itself, — the wing of the unfledged bird. But I know not why, on this account, we should speak disdainfully of a thousand lowly satisfactions, because they do not come up to the stature of all that we can conceive. If that be the measure we demand, no prolonging of life, no greater security in our state, no intenser enjoyments in our lot, can satisfy us, because we have aspirations and thirsts which nothing short of infinity can fill.

The chief reason why we talk about the vanity of human life is, that God has made our nature larger than the world. It is

through the greatness of what we *conceive* that we learn to under-rate what we *have*. What was the name of that Roman emperor who died in that quaint old city of York in England?

Minister. — The Emperor Severus, do you mean?

Arthur. — Yes: that is the name. Well, when he, on his death-bed, said, "I have been every thing, and nothing satisfies me" ("Omnia fui, et nihil expedit"), was this a judgment against the world, or a verdict against himself? For the old Hebrew king, I cannot help feeling some compassion. There is not, I believe, in the writings of Solomon, any reference to a future life. His sad moan seems like a blind longing for something better, — the protest of a great nature dimly conscious of wants and aspirations which this life cannot satisfy. His outlook on life was not altogether unsuited to the time in which his lot was cast. Can we do nothing but repeat those complaints and dirges which — wise man, though he was called — were hardly wise in him, and are, it seems to me, neither wise nor grateful nor Christian in us?

During the above conversation between Arthur and the minister, I kept the attitude of an attentive listener. My interest in it was partly from the animated and kindly manner of the former, partly from seeing how much and how freshly he had thought of the topics referred to, but more by the charm of consistency between his religious philosophy and his daily life.

Some men are happy only in spite of their religion, which seems like a burden, heavy and sad, which they take up with much ado. Arthur's joyous nature was more happy in consequence of his religion; for he lived in it as in an atmosphere of beauty and love.

How many were the expressions of his wholesome and hearty life, outside of the circuit of his farm! In his frequent and loved horseback-rides round the town, he was often seen conversing kindly at the farmer's door, or by the wayside; and cheerful and cheering sayings of his went further than he dreamed of: for who can calculate the orbit of a word? The large library which his father had collected, and to which he himself was continually adding, was at the service of a wide circle of readers, whose individual tastes he

took unwearied pains to please. The improvement of the public schools was a favorite object with him; but, leaving the common methods to others, he made it a point to form personal acquaintance with the teachers, and to elevate their conception of what discipline and instruction should be.

As for the system of miscellaneous public lectures, of late so much in vogue, he never favored it. I have heard him say something of the temptations they held out to skim knowledge and corrupt the taste, and of "the general unwholesomeness of so much plum-pudding!" as he said; but I never fully understood his mind on this point.

Every now and then, he got up a class for the study of some branch of natural history. Our meetings at each other's houses were occasions of great social pleasure. I remember particularly the enthusiasm he inspired for the study of the leaves of trees. For a long while, our herbariums were in fashion. They never failed to afford an inconceivable amount of pleasure and instruction in marking the classification, orders, permanent types, varied structures, manifold hues, graceful forms, and apparent functions of a class of objects too often deemed quite unworthy of much notice; as if any thing the divine Hand condescends to make does not show His affluence, and is not worthy of the profoundest study.

Nor must I fail to allude to his more sportive moods; the keenness with which he entered into the diversions of his younger brothers and sisters; the charming playfulness of his eye when, at table, he repeated some anecdote or amusing scrap of history; the picnic parties he assembled in his woods, where abounded the most contagious mirth; the vivacity with which he took part in the plays and games of young persons during the long evenings of winter.

At all these scenes, he was the central object of affection and interest. Not that he had any *rôle* of wit or drollery to act, or that he led off briskly in any proposed amusement. This was not his nature. But he had a quick, instinctive sympathy with the best humor of the hour, and a quiet power to reflect it, as if from a magic mirror, on every thing around.

The blank which the withdrawal of such a companion and friend leaves in a rural neighborhood can hardly be imagined. Sweet and beautiful memories! What costly pile of marble can be a monument equal to you!

Such memories in a quiet country place have a singular longevity. Nothing is more noticeable than the different characters of towns only six miles apart. If we compare two of them together, it is apparent that one is rude, the other polished; one is selfish, the other public-spirited. We see no cause for the disparity; but we shall find it, if we search aright. Years ago, in the latter place, there lived one whose refined and generous nature sent out virtue to all who touched the hem of his garment, or remembered those who had touched it. The pebble dropped on the quiet surface of this sheltered lake — how far may its gentle undulations extend!

OH thou life of my flesh, and of my soul in Christ my brother! I beseech thee in the hunger of my soul, and intreat thee with all my powers, though they be weak, to give me what thou hast promised me, and freely bestow upon me, in my Saviour Jesus Christ, his flesh for food, and his blood for drink, to refresh my poor, hungry soul, that it may be quickened and strengthened in the word which became man, by which it may long and hunger after thee aright!

Oh thou deepest love in the most sweet name Jesus, give thyself into the desire of my soul! For therefore thou hast moved thyself, and, according to thy great sweetness, manifested thyself in the human nature, and called us to thee, — us that hunger and thirst after thee, — and hast promised us that thou wilt refresh us. I now open the lips of my soul to thee, oh thou sweet Truth! and, though I am not worthy to desire it of thy holiness, yet I come to thee through thy bitter passion and death, then having sprinkled my uncleanness with thy blood, and sanctified me in thy humanity, and made an open gate for me, through thy death, to thy sweet love in thy blood. Through thy five holy wounds, from which thou didst shed thy blood, I bring the desire of my soul into thy love. — *Behmen.*

RANDOM READINGS.

GLEANINGS FROM FOREIGN PERIODICALS.

[We propose to publish, in successive numbers, a brief selection of items of information gathered from foreign papers and reviews, bearing upon the great religious and philanthropic movements of our times. They will be prepared with care, expressly for the Magazine, under the above head.]

THE bishop of London, in his earnest efforts to provide for the spiritual destitution of his diocese, has obtained, as was stated at a late public meeting, the sum of four hundred and sixty thousand dollars. Provision has been made for the services of eighty-eight additional clergymen. Of these, forty-six have already been appointed. The remainder will be set apart as soon as the men can be found. Clerical support is more readily furnished than the right clerical service.

A BOOK has recently been published in London, entitled "Woman's Work in the Church," written by John Malcolm Ludlow. It gives a complete history of the successive phases of woman's work, from the "deaconesses" of the Primitive Church down to the "deaconesses' institutes," which are now springing up in various Protestant countries. In these institutes, it is said, the members "resemble the primitive deaconesses in being bound by no vows, not being secluded from the world, and in being actually engaged in works of charity." There can be no doubt that an immense power of Christian love and activity might be organized in every large community, by giving proper scope to female usefulness.

It will not be thought an unnatural sequel to the above, if we add, that the great increase of inmates in religious houses in England, under the patronage of the Anglican High Church, has called forth some loud and earnest opposition. Public meetings have been held, and inflamed addresses have been given, in which it has been stated, "that a Church which would sanction Protestant nunneries ought to be driven from the land by a scourge of scorpions." Parliament has been petitioned to appoint a committee

to search these houses. A writer in a late number of the "London Examiner" believes that all this hue and cry is got up in the interest of a religious party that seeks a re-action against both the High Church and the Broad Church; the former being likely, as he says, "to steal away the hard-headed men, and the latter the soft-hearted women." A new and more aggressive combination is seeking power, and is trying to call to its aid all Dissenters who are offended because "Exeter and Oxford cannot be brought to say that all Catholics will be damned, and that London and Lincoln will not say distinctly that any earnest, though erring, believer will be damned at all."

A COMMISSION is at present employed to ascertain, by careful measurements, the exact height of Jerusalem above the Dead Sea. It is under the charge of the Topographical Department of the English War Office, at a cost of one thousand dollars, to be paid, half by the Royal Society and half by the Royal Geographical Society.

THE "London Athenæum" closes a very extended account of the "Life of Cæsar," by the French Emperor, in these words: "If this had appeared as the work of an ordinary historian, it would have attracted public attention. But associated with the name of one of the most remarkable men of this age,—one whose power is such as to cause his every action to be canvassed, his very thoughts to be suspected,—such a work will be perused with extraordinary interest and digested with very unusual care. Truly it is in every sense an imperial book. The concise judgments passed upon the various acts of Cæsar and his contemporaries exhibit the discernment of the statesman, while the insight which has been taken into the motives and conduct of the old Roman senators and nobles displays the penetrating instinct of the politician."

A NEW work on "The Holy Land" is advertised in London, as soon to appear from the pen of W. Hepworth Dixon, the editor of the "London Athenæum," and the author of the remarkable work on "Lord Bacon and his Times." A week we once passed with Mr. Dixon impressed us with his spirit of research and nice observation; and, if his proposed book does not add greatly to our knowledge on a subject which has been so often treated, we feel sure that the results of fresh observation will be presented in an attractive and graphic manner.

ST. PATRICK'S Cathedral, in Dublin, the ruinous and neglected condition of which has so long offended the eyes of all visitors, has just been thoroughly repaired. "All these hideous deformities," says the "London Review," "have now been removed; and St. Patrick's Cathedral is restored to its primitive purity and grandeur. Nothing is wanted. It was handed over to the restorer a ruin: it is now returned to the dean and chapter perfect in every part, — steeple, roofs, walls, pillars, windows, stained glass, bells, drainage, ventilation, warming, lighting, and even every item of upholstery." The "Review" goes on to tell us, that all this restoration was the free gift of one man, — Benjamin Lee Guinness, who has expended the sum of seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. It adds, "A work which was too great for the knights of St. Patrick to attempt, and from which the old Irish parliament shrank back in awe, has been effected in four years by a single Dublin merchant."

A WRITER in the February number of the "London Christian Observer" gives an intelligent and full account of "The State of the Roman-Catholic Church in Italy." After the enumeration of many statistics, which we omit, he says, "What do we see within a few short years? — This nation rising as one man, and restored to a rational liberty, civil and religious; the light of God's word breaking in upon the darkness of a thousand years; men daring to doubt and inquire, where, through an hereditary bondage of ages, they dared not to think; the evangelist kneeling and praying where the priest trampled his opponent in the dust; the word of God disseminated where the inquisitor kept his instruments of torture; cheerful countenances crowding the streets of cities where lately downcast and despairing looks told you of oppressive wrong." The writer feels sure that the present state of things in Italy is weaning every day thousands from an adherence to the temporal power of the Church. He thinks, however, that, through the prevailing jealousy of all outside interference, the best help which Christians from other countries can send to Italy is the Scriptures, freely circulated in its own tongue, and works that will simply and clearly explain Protestant views of doctrine and worship.

A LEADING article in the "American Church-Review," for last January, gives some interesting facts in regard to the Lutheran Church in the United States. It has 40 synods, 2,487 congregations, 1,400 ministers, 260,000 communicants, and a population

from two to three millions. Here would be an effective Christian body, were there not doctrinal differences that impair concert of action. Beside national differences, as English, German, Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian Lutherans, there is Old Lutheranism and New Lutheranism, Rationalizing Lutheranism, and Orthodox Lutheranism. Of Scandinavian Lutherans, there are 150,000; while in a German population of four millions there is nearly a million and a half supposed to be Lutherans. Since the Rebellion, the Southern Lutherans have formed a separate general synod, which the Lutherans of Texas, however, have not joined; they being adverse to slavery and in favor of the Union.

THE manner in which the Pope's Encyclical Letter has been received is most significant of the altered condition of the papacy. In the bosom of the Roman-Catholic Church, there has been a profound grief at a measure which forgets all the progress that has been made for the last three hundred years; while, outside of the Papal Church, the pretensions, the dogmatism, the ridiculous assumptions, the empty claims of power, of that Letter, have called forth only contempt. Once such a document would have convulsed the world with terror. Now the world indeed shakes; but with derision.

THE awful ravages of the Cyclone in India, on the 4th of October last, we are but just beginning to comprehend. It extended over a space a hundred and twenty-one miles long by nineteen broad. Over much of this rushed a storm-wave of water, fifteen feet deep, and moving at the frightful rapidity of twenty-seven miles an hour. Houses, cattle, human beings, were swept away instantly. In one place, 20,665 souls perished; in another, 5,000; in another, 1,978; and, in one village of 1,400, only 27 were left. We have not seen the entire footing-up of these tables of destruction; but it is evident here was one of those great historical calamities like the destruction of Lisbon or Pompeii.

No one can cast his eye over a file of foreign reviews and papers, without noticing how much religious questions enter into all popular discussions. The great controversies of the times everywhere assume theological aspects, and lead to discussions which are full of interest to every devout and hopeful believer. We hope to give our readers the results of an occasional glance at them.

M.

THE UNITARIAN CREED.

SEVERAL confessions of faith have been published of late, setting forth the Unitarian belief; all of them very full on the negative side, and very lame and meagre on the positive side. We have seen none which does not resolve itself into simple Ebionism, such as the Judaizing Christians held in the first century,—a creed so lean and poor that the sect died out and soon disappeared. If we are to have a creed, let it be large and generous, not remanding us back to Judaism, but leaving room for all that the Church has realized, and a great deal more. A correspondent expresses much apprehension, that the National Convention, at New York, will posit itself on some one of these narrow and shaky platforms, and commit the denomination to bald humanitarianism. We have no idea that they will perpetrate such an egregious folly; a measure that would unchurch Channing, Pierce, Kendall, Kirkland, Lardner, Clark, Price, and, last not least, Dr. Watts himself (for his last recorded faith is undeniably Unitarian); say nothing of a multitude of others, both among the living and the dead, who have belonged to the Unitarian communion. The fathers of the denomination had a creed,—very large and comprehensive. It was Christ, the foundation and the only Master, with every man's right of private interpretation. They did not object to creeds. They made no such issue with Orthodoxy. They objected to *human* creeds; to making any man's private interpretations of the Bible, or those of any body of men, the foundation of the churches, and not the divine creed itself. The whole Unitarian controversy proceeded on this ground, and no other; the churches all stood upon it, and most of them stand there still,—“The Church heareth none but Christ.” Make this ground narrower, such as somebody's dogmata about Christ, and we become a sect like the rest,—a sect, and not a Church. Give up this ground, make the word of Christ like any other man's; and we are neither a Church nor a sect, but a number of forlorn individuals, each drifting on his own plank, if he can find one, with a fair chance of being engulfed in the next sea. The National Unitarian Convention will construct no such wretched platform as our correspondent is apprehensive of, judging from the good sense of those who are likely to be its leading spirits.

S.

THE DYING SOLDIER AND THE DOVE.

[We extract the following touching incident from a "Memorial of Major Edward G. Park," printed for private circulation. — E.]

A LITTLE incident of peculiar beauty occurred on the day of Major Park's death. A dove placed itself, early in the forenoon, on a balcony near the window of the room in which he was breathing his last. It remained there immovably, often observed by the inmates of the house, until six. At six, he died; and, immediately afterwards, it was observed that the dove had flown, and has never returned. A lady friend has seized the incident; and, under her delicate touch, it has been preserved in the following graceful lines : —

THE MESSENGER.

Art thou sent from the spirit-world, sweet dove,
 On this holy day of rest,
 To bear my soul to the realms above,
 To a region than earth more blest?
 Shall I close my eyes on these scenes so dear,
 On the faces of loving friends,
 To gaze upon brighter glories there
 Where the spirit alone ascends?
 Shall I bid farewell to the hopes of time,
 To the honors which earth bestows,
 And rest secure in a fairer clime
 Where peace like a river flows?
 Then bear me away on thy wings, sweet dove,
 Far away from earth's pain and strife,
 Where await me kind angels and spirits of love
 At the gates of eternal life!
 And oft as the shadows of evening lower,
 And to memories sad give birth,
 Wilt thou not come back, with thy soothing power,
 To the friends I have left on earth, —
 Bearing some message, upon thy wings,
 Of love from the spirit-land,
 Shedding new light on the unseen things,
 The mysteries of God's hand?
 Then away with my spirit beyond the sky,
 O'er the pathway by angels trod,
 Nearer and nearer the throne on high,
 The home of my Father, — God.

C. M. P.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIANITY.

"Thus the Scripture miracles stand more and more alone and isolated. It seems to be the inevitable consequence, — a consequence, we may presume, not undesigned by God, — that, being more strongly contrasted with actual experience and with the vast development of the study and knowledge of natural causes, their force should diminish. As such events recede, and must recede, further into remoter distance, and become more at issue with our ordinary daily thoughts and opinions, the belief becomes a stronger demand upon the faith.

"Men believe in miracles, because they are religious. I doubt their becoming religious through the belief in miracles. Some may look back with idle regret to what they call the ages of faith. I confess, this is to me repulsive. Write of those time with calm, considerate candor, if you will, with devout admiration; but, in our day, such language is but folly persuading itself that it is wisdom because it thinks itself to be piety. It seems to make common cause between that which mankind has generally discarded as the object of belief, and that which, I trust, it will ever retain. I am not prepared to put on the same level faith in the Gospels and faith in the Golden Legend.

"For at the same time, and seemingly with equal steps, the moral and religious majesty of Christianity has expanded on the mind of man. The religious instincts of man have felt themselves more fully and perfectly satisfied by the gospel of Christ. These instincts will still cleave to those truths which are the essence of religion, — which are religion; while that which is temporary, and belongs to another period of thought and knowledge, will gradually fall away.

"Christianity, at its first promulgation by our Lord and his apostles, was an appeal to the conscience, the moral sense, the innate religiousness, of mankind; not so much to the wonder, the awe, the reverence, as to feelings more deeply seated in his nature, — less to the imagination than to the spiritual being of man. Its wonders (admit the miracles to the utmost extent) were rare and occasional; its promises, its hopes, its remedial and reconciling and sanctifying and self-sacrificing and sorrow-assuaging and heaven-aspiring words were addressed to the universal

human heart. Is not this, in some degree, foreshown in the gospel? Among the signs of his coming, after having recounted his wonderful cures of all diseases and infirmities, the Saviour seems to rise to, to lay the ultimate stress on, the simple words, 'And the poor have the gospel preached to them.' To this moral test, the Saviour himself seems to submit his own wonderful works. How were his works to be distinguished from those at that time thought equally true and equally wonderful, only that they were ascribed to Beelzebub, the Spirit of evil? It was by their beneficence, their oppugnancy to evil, — a test cognizable by, and only cognizable by, the conscience or moral sense of man.

"For the perpetuity of religion, of the true religion, — that of Christ, — I have no misgivings. So long as there are women and sorrow in this mortal world, so long there will be the religion of the emotions, the religion of the affections. Sorrow will have consolation which it can only find in the gospel. So long as there is the sense of goodness, the sense of the misery and degradation of evil, there will be the religion of what we may call the moral necessities of our nature, — the yearning for rescue from sin, for reconciliation with an all-holy God. So long as the spiritual wants of our higher being require an authoritative answer; so long as the human mind cannot but conceive its imaginative, discursive, creative, inventive thought to be something more than a mere faculty or innate or acquired power of the material body; so long as there are aspirations towards immortality; so long as man has a conscious soul, and feels that soul to be his real self, his imperishable self, — so long there will be the religion of reason. As it was the moral and religious superiority of Christianity — in other words, the love of God diffused by Christ, 'by God in Christ' — which mainly subdued and won the world; so that same power will retain it in willing and perpetual subjection. The strength of Christianity will rest, not in the excited imagination, but in the heart, the conscience, the understanding, of man." — *Preface to Milman's History of the Jews, Revised Edition.*

LETTER TO THE PROPRIETOR.

DEAR SIR,—I send, at your request, a few extracts from letters received from the army in regard to our religious reading. Many more might be given.

This is from a lady connected with a soldier's hospital :—

"I thank you for 'The Monthly Religious Magazine.' We had a number of old ones, which I found were read with great interest by many of our patients. My experience goes to show, that the door is open widely for a more liberal faith than the dominant one of the past, and that multitudes are hungering and thirsting for just what we are able to give. I have been a constant attendant at the soldiers' prayer-meetings, both in the chapel and in the wards, and could not help noticing, that, while the exercises of the chaplains were uniformly Trinitarian in form, those of the soldiers were very rarely so."

A young man writes :—

"I was very much interested in the February number of 'The Religious Magazine,' which chanced to fall into my hands. Reading-matter of a kind like that is so scarce here in the trenches, that I am emboldened by your Circular to ask you to send it to my address."

The following is from an Orthodox chaplain :—

"Am always glad to get the publications which you send. The tracts of the American Unitarian Association meet the wants of the soldiers better than those of any other society that have come to my notice."

An Episcopalian chaplain and superintendent of a Soldiers' Home, writing to acknowledge the receipt of "The Monthly Religious Magazine," papers, &c., writes :—

"They will always be welcome in our 'Home.' Outside the army, we have our preferences, of course; but here we know no doctrine or creed, save that which supports the good old flag and true loyalty."

I very often receive requests for library books of a miscellaneous kind,—standard histories or novels or poetry or other useful works. These we cannot, of course, furnish with the money of the Association; but we shall be glad to use the facilities we have, by sending to the places where they seem to be most needed, any books that may be given to us for that purpose. We should only be willing to send, however, those that are of real interest and worth.

Truly yours,

CHARLES LOWE.

SOMERVILLE, MASS., March 20, 1865.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The History of the Jews, from the earliest period down to modern times. By HENRY HART MILMAN, D.D., Dean of St. Paul. Reprinted from the newly revised and corrected London edition. In three volumes. Boston: William Veazie. New York: Hurd & Houghton. 1864.

The reader will find, in our "Random Readings," an extract from the admirable preface to this edition. The preface is so sensible and so timely, as well as so reverent and true, that we would gladly have printed the whole of it. Dr. Milman's book is well and favorably known. It has been in the hands of almost an entire generation; and, where a more elaborate and learning-laden history would have been laid aside, this pleasantly written narrative of Jewish fortunes has been read and read again, and with the utmost satisfaction and profit. As we all know, many points of Milman's important and interesting subject require a delicate treatment, — such a treatment as can be given only by one who, besides being a competent scholar, is endowed with what we may call perhaps a religious imagination, — a faculty which Mr. Theodore Parker lacked altogether. In this particular, Milman is singularly happy. Moreover, if there is a matter which must come at last into doubt, he leaves the reader to approach it gradually and naturally, and does not stagger and amaze and offend him with an abrupt and pronounced denial. The writer has brought up the revised edition to the measures of the new times, with its new learning, though he has made it plain — what, indeed, had been made plain to others who are not ready to be imposed upon by the dogmatism of scepticism any more than by the dogmatism of the conservative — that the alleged new learning is often very slender in material and in result, spite of much sounding of the trumpet. The third volume brings down to modern times the history of this wonderful Hebrew people, and gives us, in small compass, a mass of valuable historical and critical details. We wish to call attention specially to this portion of the work, to correct an impression which some may have that these pages are occupied simply with a paraphrase of the historical

portions of the Old Testament. The material and form of the volumes correspond, in every respect, to the high character of the contents. For household and parish and school libraries, the book is admirably adapted. E.

Two Pamphlets. By B. F. BARRETT. Correspondence between Rev. Thomas Worcester, D.D., and B. F. Barrett; being a Sequel to the "Plain Letter."—Swedenborg and his Mission; or, a Sketch of the Character, Claims, and Teachings of the Great Seer. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

The "Correspondence" is closed by Dr. Worcester, who tells Mr. Barrett his "true position,"—that he is "set on" by "evil spirits;" that he is a "slave" to them; that he "never can come into a state of freedom, except by doing works meet for repentance;" that he shall "open no more letters" from him, till there is evidence that he has "come into a different state."

If Swedenborgianism is so heavenly in its influence as its disciples claim, we wonder very much how a man, who believes in it so heartily as Mr. Barrett does, could become so entirely possessed with the Devil as here represented; and, whether so possessed or not, how it could inspire this *style* of correspondence. We have a dim recollection of being plied ourselves with this amiable vocabulary; of being called "thief," "robber," "wolf in sheep's clothing," and we know not what else, as we have not looked for a long time into the Swedenborgian organs. "Stripling," "blasphemer," "profaner," were also among these holiday terms applied to some other heretics. Touching these sweet refrains of the "heavenly doctrines," our own opinion is, that the best course, dictated alike by wisdom and self-respect, is, not to hear them, much less hold "correspondence" with them,—putting a Pacific Ocean between you and them,—and so let them melt away in the distance, "like a song that dies along the sea, and then for aye is mute."

The other pamphlet, "Swedenborg and his Mission," is one of the best things, we think, the very best, that has come from the pen of Mr. Barrett. In forty-eight pages, written in a clear style, free of the diffuseness which is Mr. Barrett's besetting sin, in a frame of mind tempered with the mildest and sweetest charity, and a most catholic spirit, he sets forth the claims of his beloved Swedenborg. It is less discriminating than any competent criticism of Swedenborg should be; but, for the end it was written for,

— to draw attention to the claims of the great seer, and help to a just appreciation of the wealth of truth and goodness in his writings, — it is exceedingly well done. s.

A Book of Golden Deeds, of All Times and all Lands; gathered and narrated by the author of the "Heir of Redcliffe." Cambridge: Sever & Francis.

This is a book of stories, — some of them rare, some of them well known in literature, illustrating the beauty and heroism of self-sacrifice. The heroes and heroines are of all religions and peoples, and they give us animating views of the best side of human nature. It is an interesting book for any one to read: children are delighted and thrilled with these tales of self-devotion, and get excellent practical lessons from them. s.

Essays in Biography and Criticism. By PETER BAYNE, M.A., author of "The Christian Life, Social and Individual." First and second series. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 1865.

We have here two very pleasant volumes, wise in thought, abundant and various in illustration, and in spirit thoroughly religious, — valuable contributions to our Christian literature. E.

PAMPHLETS.

Co-operation in the Father's Business: A Discourse preached at the Installation of Rev. S. B. Marvin, Harrison Square, Jan. 25, 1865. By JOHN WEISS.

The Cooling Globe; or, the Mechanics of Geology. By C. F. WINSLOW, M.D.

Both of the above are to be found with Messrs. Walker, Fuller, & Co.

The Fountain of Christian Truth: A Discourse by Rev. Dr. FURNES. Philadelphia: Sherman & Co., printers.

We have from Wm. V. Spencer, 134, Washington Street, "The Work of New England in the Future of Our Country," an election sermon by Rev. A. L. Stone, D.D., delivered Jan. 4, 1865.